

Nation

Volume 11, No. 1 • November 28, 2003



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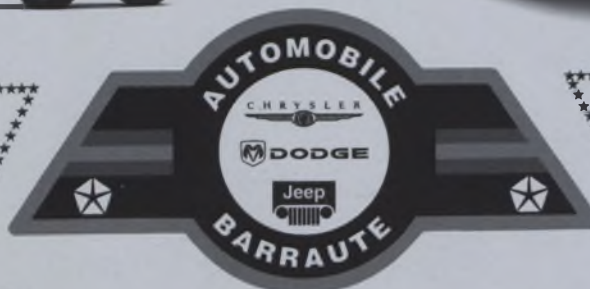


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Hydro-Quebec is honoured and proud to participate in this 10th anniversary special issue.

Over the last decade, the Nation, by its involvement and commitment, has established its own path within Cree communities.

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Petro-Canada has always believed that our country's most valuable resource is the energy of talented people. Today we would like to salute those who stand first among our first peoples, who by hard work, dedication and energy are the recipients of a Petro-Canada Aboriginal Education Award.



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Dean Pasowisty
Noka Ryan
Haskan Sioui
Jennifer Stickney
Brittany Thompson
Mandy Willard
Jason Young
Jenna Zee



Only as good as our readers

by Will Nicholls

It's been 10 years already since we published the very first issue of *The Nation*. We started off with a \$1,000 ad, a borrowed computer and then went on to work the first 10 months without pay. The reason we started was we felt that the Cree deserved to know the issues affecting them.

When we started, our way of thinking was that we would go for as long as we could. Little did we dream or know that 10 years later we would still be putting this magazine out there not only to the James Bay Cree, but also to communities in Northern Ontario and among the Inuit of Northern Quebec.

It is a milestone and one that makes us all very proud. *The Nation* shows no signs of slowing down. While a part of that is due to our perseverance, it is mostly due to you, the reader. Without your support and encouragement we could not have gone on as long as we have while keeping the high standards you expect of us.

We have never set out to intentionally harm anyone. Our goal is to print the truth. We publish stories and nothing more. Each one is as truthful as the people telling us about the event or issue has been. Sometimes though, the truth hasn't always been evident, as there seemed to be as many truths as there were people.

As a result, some might say that we are for someone or for another but that isn't so. Our purpose is to give all Crees a voice as much as is possible... within legal constraints and in a timely fashion.

We don't take sides but if someone doesn't get back to us, then we have to go with the story as is. In a later issue we try to fill in the blanks. You see, a story has many sides and as a news magazine we try to show all of them. In this way, Crees

will have all the information to make their own choices and decisions on any issue. You might say that is our philosophy: tell as many sides of the story as we can. Then let the reader make up his or her own mind on what the truth is. That has never changed. We don't say we are the 'voice of the Cree' but prefer to think we help to give a voice to the Cree.

The responses we receive to our stories never cease to amaze me. When I hear someone comparing *The Nation* to the *National Enquirer* I tend to laugh it off. All our stories are researched as well as we can and we believe them to be accurate. You don't see "batboy" photos or "Grand Chief spends night with Madonna" type of stories in *The Nation*.

What makes it all worthwhile is the story that turns out to be a gem. There are tons of 'people helping out people' stories out there and we try to find them. An example is Simon's story in the August 22 issue. We received a letter from Simon's mom and have printed it in this issue. It is heart-warming and everyone in the office was happy to see it. It lets us know that we are a part of the community in so many ways. I promise that you will continue to see this in the next 10 years also.

The Nation is something to be proud of as are all the accomplishments of the Cree. I feel proud when I hear people have told each other stories that were in the magazine over the phone. I feel proud when I hear that stories have changed lives or brought people closer together. This is part of what we do and who we are at *The Nation*. We believe in community and we believe in people.



EYYOU ISTCHEE SPORTS AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION

Waachiya!! Greetings from Mistissini

This letter is to inform all Ennuuch and Eeyou of the Cree Nation of Quebec of the newly created EYYOU ISTCHEE SPORTS AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION.

On behalf of the Recreation Directors, I am pleased and honored to provide to you information concerning Eeyou Istchee Sports and Recreation Association. The Eeyou Istchee Sports and Recreation Association is now recognized at all levels of Government both Provincial and Federal and at the International level.

Over a period of five (5) years now, the Recreation Directors have worked on creating a much-needed sports body that would act as the advisory and representation body for all sports and recreation activities and events and more particularly for all athletes of the Cree Nation of Quebec in every sport.

Having completed this task, we now are in the process of fully implementing the goals and objectives of the association. I have been appointed as the Interim Regional Recreation Coordinator to establish and prepare the necessary groundwork of the association until it assumes its full operations.

The Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs - for the grant of a charter by letters patent under the provisions of Part II of the Canada Corporations Act constituting the Board of Directors as members of the Corporation hereby created, a body corporate and politic under the name of EYYOU ISTCHEE SPORTS AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION, L'ASSOCIATION DES SPORTS ET DES LOISIRS DE EYYOU ISTCHEE.

The general objectives of the Corporation are as follows:

- a. To provide documentation and full support to the Eeyou Istchee Sports and Recreation Association and the Cree Regional Events and Entertainment (C.R.E.E.) committee.
- b. To provide support to the Cree Regional Events and Entertainment through its committee.
- c. To be the voice and represent the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee at the Provincial, National and International organizations and to participate in exchange programs and other similar activities.
- d. To promote the quality of life in the Cree communities through sports and recreation.
- e. To provide training and upgrading of recreation personnel of the regional and local association.
- f. To act as an advisory and consultative body in the areas of sports, recreation, leisure, traditional activities including solicitation for funding for local and regional sports and recreation organizations.
- g. To solicit and secure the necessary funding to manage the operations of the Corporation.
- h. To solicit and secure funds for the development of sports, recreation, leisure, therapeutic and traditional activities.
- i. To do research and obtain all the necessary documentation for programs based on the needs and interests of the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee.
- j. To provide technical assistance if required to the development of the communities, recreation and park facilities projects.
- k. To provide consultation services to athletes that are enrolled in athletic programs outside the territory of the Cree Nation of Eeyou Istchee.
- l. The purpose and objectives of the Corporation shall be exclusively charitable.

The document on the general by-laws and concerning the general purposes and objectives for which the Association was incorporated, as expressed in its letters of patent is available for review in my office.

Jean-Baptiste Loon -
President, EISRA

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A TRIBUTE TO A CO-WORKER, FRIEND, UNCLE AND FATHER

PETER JOHN GULL

JUNE 10, 1943 - JUNE 18, 2003



In the late 1970's during and shortly after the relocation project of the Cree First Nation of Waswanipi, it became quite evident that with the development of the community and the population growth that the community would require some type of an economic base. It was during these years that the Council of the Cree First Nation of Waswanipi proceeded to undertake the task of creating a community industry and forestry, being the main industry in the territory was selected to be such an industry for the community.

In 1983, with the creation of the first native corporation within the community of Waswanipi and most likely one of the first native corporations involved in forestry within the province of Quebec, Mishtuk Corporation was created.

It was during this time when Peter became the director general of Mishtuk Corporation and continued to be involved in the development of the Waswanipi community forestry industry and the creation of the Nabakatuk Forest Products sawmill.



Peter J. Gull, speech during the opening of the sawmill

In June 1997 and after several years of negotiations and planning, the community wood transformation center, which we know today as the Nabakatuk Forest Products sawmill, became a reality.

During these two decades Peter was employed by Mishtuk Corporation and

held various executive positions although he faced many challenges in life, he became vision impaired and became an amputee. In the last ten years, we at Mishtuk have been witnesses to his perseverance and dedication to the corporation and to life itself.



Peter, with Député Michel Letourneau & Minister Guy Chevrette

In winter of 2002-2003, Peter started making retirement plans for the end of June 2003 and in his last memo to the board of directors he wrote "I would like to extend my most sincere thanks to all the employees and the board of directors of the corporation who have supported me in my 20-year service as the director general. In addition I would also like to extend my most sincere thanks to the former chiefs and members of the Council who have supported me for the past 20 years. I do understand that there may have been some difficulties for some of the chiefs & members of the Council, whether it was for personal or political reasons to give support to the initiatives of another individual, but I still extend my most sincere thanks to these individuals."

On June 10, 2003, Peter celebrated his 60th birthday, the very same day he became ill and was rushed to the Chibougamau hospital. That same night as the family went to meet him, he was transferred by plane to Montreal. With his wife and family by his side, Peter passed on to meet his savior at the Montreal General Hospital on June 18, 2003.

Peter, you have been an inspiration to all of us and we will deeply miss your physical presence in our lives.

The employees and board of directors of Mishtuk Corporation



With the board members of Nabakatuk Forest Products

A poem written and read by Michel Awashish during the opening of the sawmill

"A man had a dream"

*A man had a vision, a goal,
For the community to be whole.
A mill was in sight, so near,
But it took many years to be.*

*The day has finally come,
When all is said and done.
For many they see a change,
Good, bad or both.*

*But for many, it's a new beginning,
A road to new challenges
and opportunities.
So here we stand, taking that first step,
For all the tomorrows we're going to face.*

*So as we go in,
remember we're not taking,
But we're taking back
what's been taken from us.
For us to maintain and
control like it's suppose to be,
For our children and
their children to be independent.
The vision, the goal is here today
Let's keep in our hearts for it to stay.
For as long as we can and more,
For it is ours.*

LONG LIVE NABAKATUK

10 Years After

by Sonny Orr

The little magazine that could

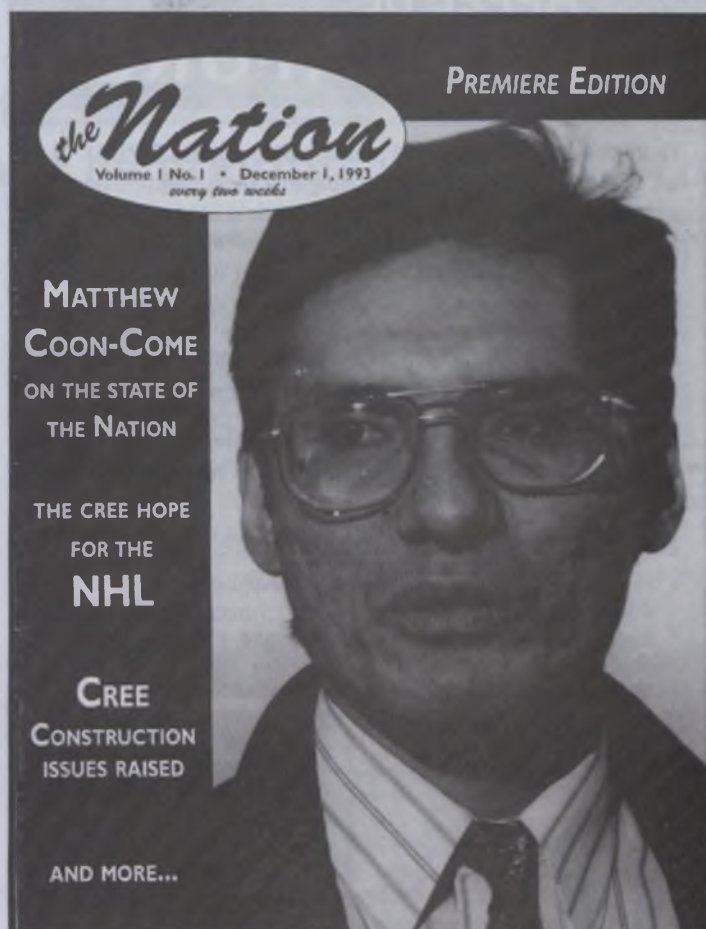
I saw something extraordinary happening at the James Bay Eeyou School in Chisasibi in the early 1980s. It was a sight that impressed me: Ernie Webb breakdancing like a pro and the circle of astounded students and adults alike crowded around the whirling dervish. I happened to be one of the founding members of the local radio station and I was interested in promoting the station to the younger generation as a possible career choice. I asked Ernie if he was interested in becoming a radio announcer and he took the bait. Within a year, Ernie was off to a community radio station program course that the James Bay Cree Communications Society offered in Mistissini where he met Will Nicholls, who happened to be a D.J. for the local radio station.

Together, they went through a barrage of trainers and board of directors and helped create the JBCCS FM station that was broadcast from Montreal. In those days, tapes were prerecorded and sent to CBC, who "allowed" us to broadcast the JBCCS show to all the communities. Then technology advanced and we sent the show by telephone, again prerecorded to the CBC. At this point in time, the JBCCS, Will, Ernie and Will's uncle Luke, became synonymous with great journalism and great radio shows. Eventually, the show went digital and was distributed via satellite. Much to our surprise, the JBCCS was the first radio program to be distributed this way, anywhere. In fact, through Ernie's research with the latest music, the songs we broadcast were quite often the first time ever heard in Canada!

Yep, Ernie and Will were quite the pair, practically re-inventing the radio show as we knew it back then. And they went beyond the usual call of duty, most often terrorizing the Chibougamau denizens until closing time. Somewhere and somehow, Ernie met Catherine Bainbridge and they eventually married and now have several children. Will continued his education in Montreal and somehow met up with Neil Diamond (not the singer, the photographer) and together, Will, Neil, Catherine and Ernie decided that the usual propaganda that was dished out about Crees and their way of life should be told as it actually happens.

Sometimes Ernie would call me for my usual off-the-wall advice (for some reason) and queried whether the name "The Nation" would infringe on the Montreal Gazette subsection "Nation" rights, and it turned out that no infringement was evident and the name stuck. Ernie also wanted to have a sturdy paper and format, and the comic book format seemed to be logical (I think for its lasting qualities and also so that it was harder on the butt if used as toilet paper). The Nation magazine was born and many a politician bet that it wouldn't last the year. Surprise, surprise. Not only did The Nation last, but it lasted longer than most politicians have!

Alex Roslin came into the picture as the ever-reliable newshound, snooping around for juicy stories and any political shenanigans were meat for editorials. Brian Webb, the omni presence of Cree wisdom and insight, also became and still is the translator. I happened to receive the occasional phone call, again giving my indispensable sound advice to



The Nation's First Issue

the gang over the first six or seven years until one fateful day, Neil decided that he was going to be a videographer and work on another venture with Ernie and Catherine. Will, with sheer willpower and a pen, now dripping with the blood of many a political target and with a dose of sarcasm, carried on the legacy of the magazine.

I thought that my stint would be for just a few issues, writing up the Reznotes column for Neil while he was gone, but somehow and for some reason, I'm still here. Many others, such as the two Lindas, Danielle, Aaron, Steve (if I missed anyone, it's because I'm getting old and senile) all have contributed to the making of the success of this great magazine.

There are times, though, that our own people tend to be critical of The Nation. It was called a cheap magazine, but hey, how many papers do you see around that comes out regularly and steadily and is free? Isn't that a sign of generosity? Are not the people's voice heard and read by others? Is it because the opinion of the writer and the reader are that different, or is it that we, as Eeyouch, have grown to accept that, yes, we are a diverse nation with many different viewpoints and opinions. I happen to have my own opinion (which many either like or despise), but that is my opinion and I'm entitled to it, so there!

But back to The Nation and the people it represents. It is an accomplishment and a very good example of skilled people working very entrepreneurially and professionally to make a dream come true, a dream that was spawned from the lack of communications among our people and communities. As for me, The Nation will be my springboard to even greater things! I thank everyone who was and is involved with this paper and I can't wait for the next 260 issues.

COMITÉ DE SÉLECTION INDÉPENDANT 2003-2004

APPEL DE CANDIDATURES

Le Réseau de télévision des peuples autochtones (APTN), un chef de file mondial dans le domaine de la télédiffusion autochtone, est à la recherche de candidats souhaitant siéger à son Comité de sélection indépendant (CSI).

Le Comité de sélection indépendant formule des recommandations (en collaboration avec le Service de la programmation) sur le choix de toutes les émissions autorisées. Le CSI se réunira en personne au moins une fois l'an, et le Service de la programmation lui transmettra des notes d'information.

Le CSI sera formé de cinq membres : un représentant pour chacun des quatre points cardinaux, ainsi qu'un représentant francophone. L'un des cinq membres sera une jeune personne âgée entre 18 et 30 ans.

Les applicants doivent satisfaire aux critères suivants :

- Être des citoyens inuits, métis ou des Premières Nations, et résider au Canada.
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- Ne pas être associés au conseil d'administration ou au personnel d'APTN.
- Ne pas être associés à des maisons de production ou de distribution, ni à un organisme politique.
- Connaître l'industrie de la télédiffusion.
- Être prêts à consacrer beaucoup de temps (des rencontres de sélection de 3 à 4 jours).
- Être disposés à voyager (Winnipeg).
- Avoir accès à un ordinateur personnel ou portatif muni d'un accès à Internet et à la messagerie électronique.
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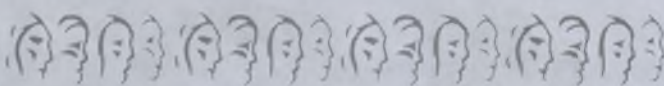
Les candidats doivent citer le numéro de dossier **ISC-APTN-2003-01**, et n'envoyer que des documents imprimés. Les candidatures doivent nous parvenir au plus tard le **16 décembre 2003 à 15 h HP, 17 h HC et 18 h HE**, à :

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R3B 2C3

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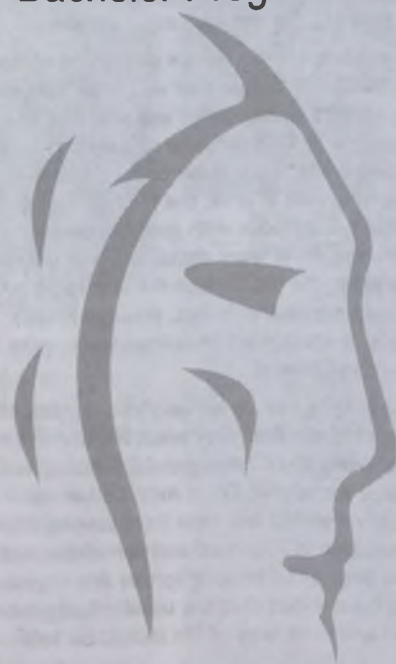


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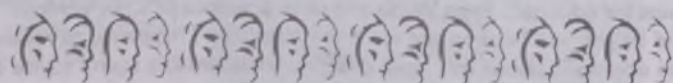
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GRAND COUNCIL FACES NEW CHALLENGES

Moses says governance issues will be priority

by Lisa Joane

The New Relationship Agreement between the Cree Nation and Quebec will reverse some of the conflict over management of resources, experienced since the James Bay Agreement was signed in 1975, said Grand Chief Ted Moses.

At a special meeting of the Grand Council, November 4 to 6, he discussed the future of self-governance of Eeyou Istchee, and some of the ways to maintain the Cree Nation within Quebec and Canada.

In the new agreement with Quebec, he said, "we work in a spirit of mutual respect and admiration." Trappers will get involved in finding solutions for forestry management problems and Cree leaders will be regularly informed of progress.

Land development concerns will also be open to input, with a choice to cancel the NBR project in favour of the EMIA/Rupert Diversion Project, under review for the next two years.

"What type of development is acceptable to the Cree Nation in the future?" he asked the Council.

A commitment of \$70 million per year in development revenues, for 50 years, is also part of the agreement. "This will help us to become major players in the development of the Territory, if we use this funding wisely," said Chief Moses.

This should have been part of the 1975 agreement on governance, he noted. The Cree rights of self-government set up in the earlier agreement covering education, health, social services, local government, income security, environmental and social protection, hunting, fishing and trapping, are part of the new agreement.

"We should look to ways of improving our management of these institutions," he said. He also called for an evaluation of local and national governments to consider whether local organizations such as treasuries and environmental officers, or the three Cree funding organizations, would receive better support from central organizations.

"The way and manner we wish to continue to exercise national governance through a Cree Nation Government is the matter we have come together to consider," said Chief Moses. "We must continue to improve the way we govern

and to increase the recognized jurisdictions of our Nation. These two are related and necessary to realizing our potential."

Effective and acceptable governance in the future, would involve both Cree and representatives of other residents of the James Bay region, he suggested. "Quebec wants to know the Cree view on this. It would have to promote and protect our rights, and also provide us with a forum in which to improve our relationships with the Jamesian communities and their mayors and councils."



He said that public consultations, which included the special meeting, will continue.

"It is more complicated now to govern the Cree Nation because we no longer live only from the bush. We have communities that need to be maintained."

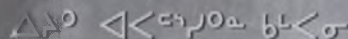
New ways to protect the land while still benefiting from its new uses must be developed, said the Grand Chief, who invited participation from all Cree people.

"Our history over the past three decades has taught us that we are strong when we speak with one voice," he said.

"Improving the Eeyou Nation Governance of Eeyou Istchee will make us stronger."



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Ted Moses: Modern-Day Trailblazer

by Will Nicholls

When it comes time to write the history of modern-day Cree trailblazers, Grand Chief Ted Moses will have his own chapter. There are those who might praise him to the skies and those who may criticize him just as much, but none can deny he has had an historic impact on the Cree of Eastern James Bay. The Paix des Braves agreement he signed with Quebec Premier Bernard Landry on Feb. 7, 2002 will run for 50 years.

Moses called it a new nation-to-nation relationship between the Quebec Crees and the government of Quebec. Proponents of the agreement say it is the first time that Natives in Canada will fully benefit from the exploitation of resources from their territory. Critics said it too easily surrendered traditional Cree demands. But in a closely contested election the following August, Moses narrowly won re-election, with the agreement playing a central role.

Moses didn't just wow the party faithful in Cree and Quebec politics. He was named Man of the Year 2001 by *l'Actualité* magazine, which cited the negotiation of the Paix des Braves as the reason. The honours didn't stop there. Moses would be named as an Officer of the Order of Quebec in May 2002, and *La Presse*, on January 19, 2003, said Moses had been chosen as the "Personality of the Year."

No one knew that this man, born on his parents' trapline, would travel so far. Moses started out as a band manager, then acted as a translator in the Malouf court case that established Cree rights to the land in 1974, and finally served as the lead Cree negotiator in the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement negotiations. After the signing of that agreement, he was the Director General of the Cree School Board. He returned to his community in the 1980s to go into the bush and to become Chief of Eastmain and in 1984 was elected Grand Chief. After Matthew Coon Come was elected to that position in 1987, Ted took on new responsibilities.

Then Moses really began to travel. As well as being hired as the official Cree Negotiator with the federal government, he was appointed as Cree Ambassador to the United Nations. There his international career would take off. In January of 1989, Chief Moses was elected as the Rapporteur for the United Nations meeting on the Effects of Racism and Racial Discrimination on the Social and Economic Relations between Indigenous Peoples and States. He is the first Indigenous Canadian and indeed the first Indigenous person to be so honoured.

Moses is recognized as a United Nations expert. He made the original submission in Vienna calling for the creation of an International Decade of Indigenous Peoples, and the establishment of a Permanent Forum for Indigenous Peoples at the United Nations.

Ted Moses represented the Grand Council of the Crees at the World Conference on the Environment in Rio. At the



World conference on Human Rights in Vienna, he was elected to represent all of the Indigenous peoples of North America.

In 1996, the University of Saskatchewan awarded him a Doctor of Laws degree, *honoris causa*, in honour of his international human rights work and his advocacy on behalf of Aboriginal peoples. That's why we call him Dr. Moses.

Currently, Dr. Ted Moses is the President of Cree Energy Distribution of Canada Inc. as well as leading the Grand Council of the Crees.



Interview with Ted Moses

The Nation: What was it like in the beginning?

Moses: Well, Premier Robert Bourassa announced the La Grande Project. The Crees reacted and the court case (Malouf) began. I was one of the members of the delegation in Montreal. My role at that time was to translate for the Elders and the trappers—many who are now gone. I also translated for the lawyers and the consultants. Eventually the negotiations on the La Grande complex began in 1974 after the Crees won the Malouf decision. The Superior Court of Quebec overturned it.

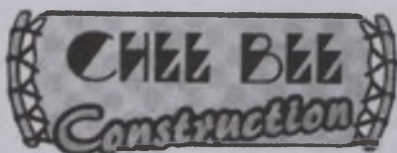
At that time the mandate (for discussions on the James Bay Project) was with the Indians of Quebec Association. They had a different objective. Their objective was to resolve or negotiate the whole question of Aboriginal rights. They wanted it settled for all the Indians in Quebec. We felt, us young Cree leaders at the time that was not the mandate our people gave to the Indians of Quebec Association. What we asked them to do was to defend Cree rights in the context of

the threat of new hydro-electric projects in the north. The project was happening in Eeyou Istchee.

After some discussion among ourselves, we kicked around the idea of having our own organization. We borrowed the concept from other parts of Canada, where they had an organization, a Grand Council that brings together all the Chiefs. It then, in effect, would speak for the Crees of northern Quebec. Later, that idea developed into the composition and objectives, which were put onto paper. This proposal was explained to the chiefs along with the situation with the Indians of Quebec Association. This was in the spring of 1974. Along with Billy and Albert Diamond, we put it before the other chiefs in the province. The executive of the Association didn't like it because it meant breaking away from the Indians of Quebec Association. We told them that we weren't breaking away. This is an organization we were creating that would be specific to the situation of the Crees. This was an organization that could complement the Association. It was not an attempt to break away, but circumstances went that way. It was none of our doing.

Then in the summer of '74 we had a meeting of all the Cree chiefs and we discussed this at Eastmain. The Grand Council was born in August and we decided to incorporate it at that time. Because of the controversy with Quebec we decided to incorporate it under federal law.

In those days, to incorporate was almost taboo. A lot of people argued against the incorporation. It wasn't necessarily



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*We would like to congratulate the Nation newsmagazine for giving
a voice to all Crees this past decade.*

Well Done!

people from the Cree camp. People felt that an incorporation meant that you accepted to be taxable and to be part of a non-Native structure. They wrongly thought that now you would start thinking like a White man. That's how the Grand Council was formed. I think that was one of the best and first big political moves that the Crees made, to form their own organization. The organization still exists today.

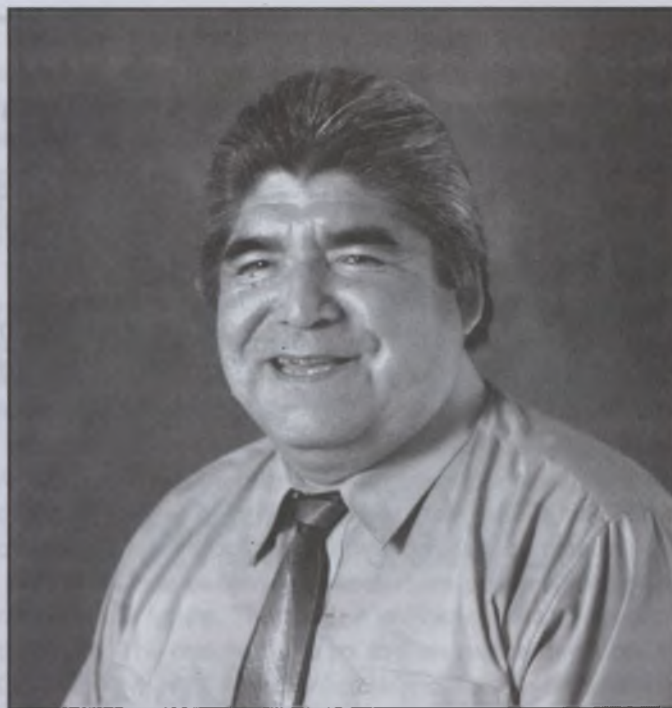
When we informed Quebec through the Quebec negotiator (John Ciacca) he was very ecstatic about the Cree decision. He would have preferred it under Quebec law, but it was still a legally constituted organization with the powers of an individual to sue and be sued. We were now in a position to be accountable because of this, and we could deal directly with Quebec. The tone and the direction of the discussions changed from then on and became more focused on the Crees in the James Bay Territory and the hydro-electric project, as opposed to the overall question of Aboriginal rights in all of Quebec.

Looking back at those years what would you say were some of the biggest changes for the Crees?

The Crees had been isolated and pretty much had led a nomadic way of life. It was almost another world. Very few people went out to experience another life and education. I think that things were changing. It was hard for people to believe that man could build such long stretches of roads or that man could change the direction of whole rivers. That man could hold back such large volumes of water and be able to determine how much electricity they could pull out and transport by wire. Those concepts were difficult to accept. But, they knew the time had come when we could no longer be alone. They knew that the people down south would eventually go in the direction of the north when they would need electrical power and when they would need resources for mining and forestry. The Elders saw it as a question of time. That's when we realized the event was already on its way.

How about the next 25 years? What do you see happening next?

The next 25 years? I've seen where the Crees have had to struggle, their rights not being recognized and the Crees not being recognized as a group, never mind as a People. Now I see we've come to the point where our rights are legally constituted in the Canadian Constitution. They are recognized in the laws of the National Assembly of Quebec. This was a fight with regards to hydro-electric development and to ensure that Cree rights were protected. In dealings with governments it is necessary to deal from a rights-based agenda. This agenda starts from your winter lodge or teepee out on the trap line and is carried to the community, out to Quebec, to Canada and eventually out to the international arena where the Crees have played a leading role in putting forth certain principles related to the recognition of the



rights of indigenous peoples in an international context, in international law. Those are big achievements that the Crees have done.

We've moved out of the era of exclusion, denial and marginalization. We are now at a point where we are recognized as having a right to participate in development and where we are also beneficiaries of development. The participation is not just token but really meaningful... joint participation in the management and planning of the natural resources of the Territory.

It was a bit in that direction in 1975. In 1975 we had 6,500 Crees. The Crees were predominantly trappers. There were just a few that had schooling. Now we have doubled that population and a larger percentage of young people are going to school. A lot of people are far more educated than before.

In the past there was a lot of animosity from governments towards the Crees because Aboriginal peoples had never before participated in the development or management of the social, economic and political aspects of their own lives. There was always someone from the outside who controlled what went on in our communities. It was the Noble Savage thing, where the government had the attitude that Indians weren't educated and able to handle their own affairs. So someone else had to do it; so we were still at that time, in the 1970s, trying to break away from that.

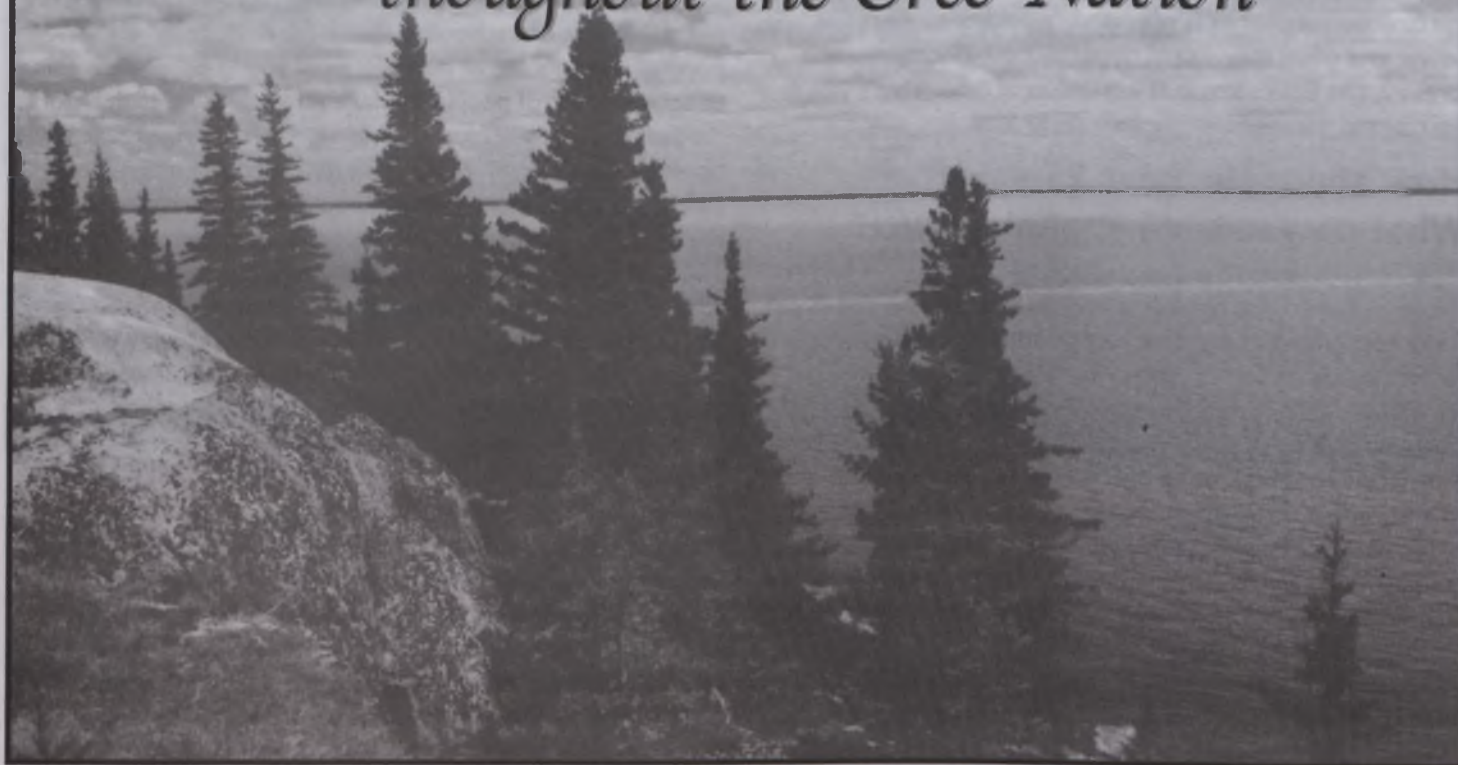
When we decided to have our own school board it was a time when Indian control over Indian education was just beginning. I'm not claiming that we prompted that idea, but we were also already thinking of already controlling our own education, largely because of the experiences in our lives with residential schools. We had been sent out. We saw an opportunity for change. It was the same thing with health. There were no structures under the federal government. In



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Quebec they had structures and they were prepared to agree with the creation of the Cree School Board and Cree Board of Health and Social Services, if we created them under Quebec law. We opted for that. It began there. We're moving now in the direction where there is real meaningful participation in the development. Not just as one-time beneficiaries, but as beneficiaries over a long period of time. It'll be 50 years and we can renegotiate after that time, if the will is there among the Crees. It is a question of attitudes and the political wills that prevail.

I think more and more Crees have experienced, have gone through the process of protecting their rights. In doing this they've also managed to protect their language. It's not that we have lost it, as has unfortunately happened to others, and have to bring it back. It's there.

Our culture is very much intact. Our people still continue to go out on the land. A lot of us continue to fish, hunt and trap. However, we need to ensure that this continues because we are in danger of losing the real hunters and trappers. We need to pass on that knowledge, that information, to the new generations of Crees. We have put ourselves in a position where we import things from the outside to use in our way of life. So I see the Crees as being in a much better position to develop and also adjust culturally. We are also doing this economically and politically.

We know the possibilities before us and it's up to us to decide what we do with them to make more things possible in the future. I think that we can become more self-governing, so that participation in development will have a much greater meaning for us. These are things that evolve over time. They don't just happen because you want them to happen, you must make them happen.

I think Cree rights will be much strengthened and I would hope that the relationship between the Crees and the governments, certainly with Quebec, will continue to move along very well. I wish I could say that with regards to the federal government.

We also will have relationships with other Aboriginal Peoples. A nation has to have relations with other peoples. It's all part of the principles of nation building. You can't build a nation over night, even though our aspirations may be greater.

I see the Crees becoming a much more powerful and greater nation in the future. The north is very important to people in the south. The people in the south now realize they need the Crees to consent if development in the north is to continue. The Crees have to be part of the planning, the decision-making and the carrying out of development in the Territory. The days of "move over Indian, I'm coming to develop your territory to take out the benefits of development"... those days are gone so far as the Crees are concerned.



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*The members of the Town Council and the population of Chibougamau
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on the occasion of your 10th anniversary.*

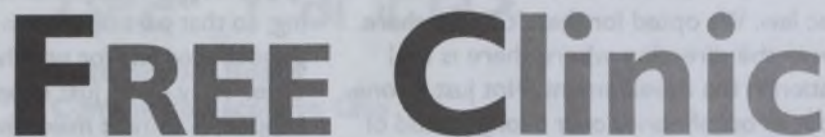
To the population of the Cree Nation our best wishes for the holiday season.

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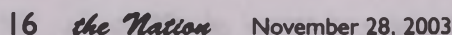
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Waskaganish: December 5th, 6th 2003 - Contact: Ernest Blueboy

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- Neutering your male dog makes them less likely to roam the neighbourhood, run away or get into fights

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Follow-up letter to 'Simon's Story'

First of all, I never imagined the kind of attention Simon's Story would generate (Nation, August 22). I have been overcome with support from the community, and I have heard of people even being brought to tears from reading his story. I never thought that my little boy's story would bring out the best in people.

In Wemindji, we have now begun efforts to raise awareness and fundraising for children with special needs. We had a presentation night on October 16th, when we presented the community with information and speeches about special needs in Wemindji. The local firefighters came and helped raise funds, to the tune of over \$1,600. They offered fire truck rides and pictures with Sparky, the fire dept. mascot. The local Community Store also donated a large cake and baked goods to this event, and the Kanawhymigoo Childcare Centre provided refreshments.

On October 21 we had a Special Needs Walk through the community, and raised funds again with the Fire Department, and Childcare Centre totalling \$793.35. The Childcare Centre had a 'Loonie Day' where each child & parent was asked to bring in a Loonie. Different entities, like the Cree Nation of Wemindji, Sam's Video and Coffee Shop, Wemindji Telecommunications Association and others have also been showing their support.

On November 8th, along with the Childcare Educators, we organized a 12-hour radiothon, from 12 to midnight. Songs were requested; we had special guest speakers, and acoustic live performances by various singers. The total amount of money

that was raised came up to almost \$7,000. I think that I can say that we all had fun doing the show, and special thanks goes to all those who volunteered their time and gave their money!

We are fundraising for these special needs children because we are trying to get special projects for them, mainly a "sensory room," which would cost approximately \$24,000 for the equipment alone. I think that I can speak on behalf of the people involved in the Walk With Me Fund, when I say thank you to all those who have shown their support. This cause has received so much encouragement from the community. The community of Wemindji has shown that when we all work together, we can do so much!

On a final note, I would like to report that Simon, now 4, has made progress, and is enjoying school. On October 5th, he finally did what I once thought was never going to happen: he called me "mommy." It may seem trivial to some, but I felt in my heart that I had been present at a small miracle. Now, when I look at my son, I don't see a child with a disability. I see Simon, my first-born son, a little boy who loves to laugh, play jokes (on me, mostly) and smile. I am learning not to take things for granted anymore, and I appreciate both my children even more, because all children are special!

Respectfully yours,
Isabelle Natawapineskum



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Flying the northern skies: THE FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT FOR AIR CREEBEC

by tsa



Preparation for a Cree airline began not long after the signing of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement in 1975. At a planning session of the Grand Council of the Crees, the Chiefs and board members of the Grand Council identified business ventures that the Cree Nation should be involved in, and air transport was high on the list.

At that time, when Cree leaders and employees of the Cree First Nations had to go south for their meetings, they had to charter one of the five air carriers that were operating in the Cree territory. It was very expensive and took quite a bit of time to get to places like Quebec, Montreal and Ottawa. The Cree Chiefs and members of the Board of Directors of the Grand Council felt that there had to be a direct link between the Cree communities of James Bay, Val d'Or and points south.

There were scheduled services provided by Austin Airways, who had a schedule from Moosonee to Waskaganish and then north to the other communities along the James Bay Coast at that time. It was decided to approach the owners of Austin Airways, the Deluce family of Timmins, Ontario, and propose a joint venture or partnership.

A five-year agreement was drafted, including a buy-out formula once the Crees were in a position to take over the

whole operation. The first flight took off in July, 1982 when a Twin Otter flew from Val d'Or to the Cree communities of James Bay and on to Great Whale.

In the initial years, the management of the company was with the Deluce family. But the Crees had controlling representation on the board of directors. In the third year of the partnership, the Crees took controlling interest on the management of the company as well as on the board.

After the fifth year, it was decided that the partnership would be extended by one year. After the sixth year, the Crees bought out the interest of the Deluce family and Air Creebec became 100 per cent owned and operated by the Cree Nation of Quebec.

In 1987, operations were extended to include northwestern and northeastern Ontario. A few years later, the northwestern Ontario operations were sold but the northeastern Ontario operations were retained.

*Today, Air Creebec has a fleet of
11 aircraft, a business volume
of \$36 million a year, and
employs over 180 people with
an annual payroll of \$6 million.*

In the early years, the main source of revenue for the company was with the transportation of passengers and cargo. At that time, many of the Cree communities on James Bay did not have access roads and all the goods and services they required had to be flown in. In subsequent years, as the access roads were constructed, the income for Air Creebec came from passengers, charters and contracts with various companies and passengers.

In the late 80s, Air Creebec went through several years of substantial losses, but in the mid-1990s, the operations started making profits. Over the last five years, Air Creebec has enjoyed substantial profits.

From the start-up in 1982 to 1992, the president of Air Creebec was Chief Billy Diamond of Waskaganish, on a part-time basis. In 1992, the Board of Directors felt that the company had grown to the point that it required a full-time president and in November, 1992, Albert Diamond was appointed to the position.

Today, Air Creebec has a fleet of 11 aircraft, a business volume of \$36 million a year, and employs over 180 people with an annual payroll of \$6 million.

When asked about achievements or successes of Air Creebec, Albert Diamond said he is "most satisfied with the fact that almost 50 per cent of our pilots are Native and it is great to see young Native pilots flying the Cree people to their communities. It is my hope that in the coming years the majority of our pilots will be Native."

Air Creebec now has three routes in Quebec departing from Montreal and two routes in northeastern Ontario from



Timmins and Moosonee. Air Creebec was also awarded a three-year contract in March 2003 from the James Bay Energy Corporation to fly the workers for the Eastmain project. The total value of the contract is \$19 million.

Since 1987, the members of the Board of Air Creebec have been Cree individuals from the Cree communities and that, in itself, is quite an achievement. In the coming years, things look very good for Air Creebec as it continues to provide air transportation services to Eeyou Istchee.



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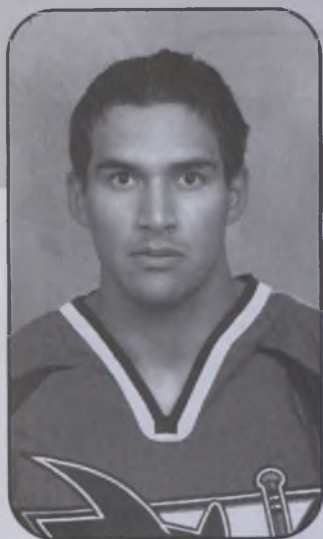
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Happy 10th Anniversary
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ABORIGINAL ROLE MODEL: NHL Player, Jonathan Cheechoo

by Steve Bonspiel

Aspiring hockey players of Eeyou Istchee now have a very inspiring role model to look up to. Jonathan Cheechoo, the pride of Moose Factory, Ontario, is currently playing a regular shift with the National Hockey League's San Jose Sharks.

Drafted by the Sharks in 1998 (2nd round, 29th overall), Cheechoo has taken a longer route than some to get to the big leagues. After becoming a star in Junior with the Belleville Bulls of the Ontario Hockey League, Cheechoo had to struggle through tough times within San Jose's system, playing in Cleveland and Kentucky.

This proved to be exactly what he needed. Instead of looking at it as a negative experience, Cheechoo used his time in the minors to push himself harder, and work towards playing full-time in the NHL.

"I just figured if I kept working as hard as I was working, and showed that I could improve each year, then they'd have to give me a chance," Cheechoo says philosophically.

Growing up, all Cheechoo wanted to do was play hockey. At 14 he moved away to play in Timmins in order to get more exposure to NHL scouts. He eventually made it to Kitchener, where he was drafted by Belleville. The rest as they say, is history.

Now that he's made it to the NHL, Cheechoo knows the key to continued success comes with working on the little things, and improving with each game. "The biggest obstacle that I had to overcome was my (lack of) speed. I spent the last three summers sprinting and doing a lot of leg work and now it's come a long way."

Because he was exposed to a different world as a teenager, there hasn't been any real culture shock in San Jose. The only thing he's still adapting to is the lack of snow, along with the warmer climate.

Cheechoo gives a lot of the credit for where he is today to former NHL coach of the year Ted Nolan. "He paved the way for us (Native people). He was definitely a role model for me growing up."

Another player that benefited from Nolan's success was Jordin Tootoo. Tootoo has now become the first Inuit to play in the NHL, which is something that impresses Cheechoo. "It's great, he's really paving the way for those people up there, and showing them that they really have a chance if they work hard enough, so I think it's great for him."

"I just figured if I kept working as hard as I was working, and showed that I could improve each year, then they'd have to give me a chance."

With the vast improvement Cheechoo has made in the last three years, he feels confident that the only place to go, is up. "I want to be the best player that I can possibly be, every year I work as hard as I can during the summer. Hopefully it'll turn into something positive on the ice. I'm off to a good start this year, so I'm definitely looking to keep it going. You never know what's going to happen each year, so I think as long as I work hard, good things will happen."

Cheech, as his friends call him, feels that being a part of the San Jose Sharks is like being a member of a large extended family. "You spend so much time around them, you pretty much see each other every day." His closest friend on the team is Jim Fahey, who is almost the same age. They were the youngest guys



The Cree-Naskapi Commission is an independent, non-governmental body established to monitor the implementation of the Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act - Canada's first Aboriginal self-government legislation which is provided for by the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement and the Northeastern Quebec Agreement.

The Cree-Naskapi Commission was established and empowered by the Act. It prepares biennial reports on the implementation of the Act and investigates any representation submitted to it relating to the implementation of the Act. It draws its legal mandate and authority from the Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act which describes the nature of local self-government for the Cree and Naskapi of Northern Quebec on their own land.

Background:

On November 11, 1975, the Cree and Inuit of Northern Quebec entered into the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement with the Governments of Canada and Quebec and three provincial crown corporations in an out-of-court settlement of claims, rights and interests in a vast amount of land which would be severely disrupted by the Quebec government's James Bay Hydro-Electric Development Project.

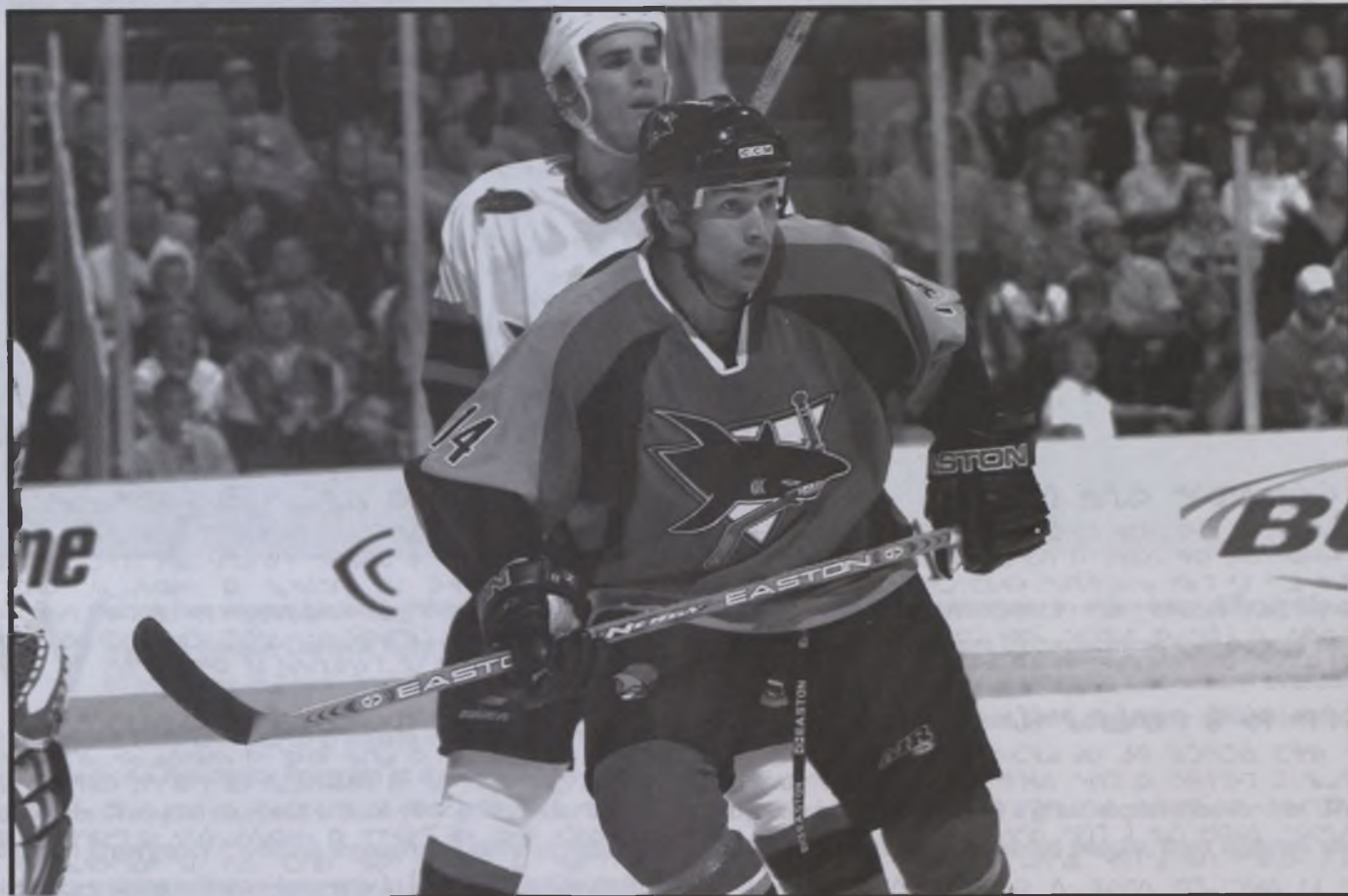
On January 19, 1978, a similar agreement, the Northeastern Quebec Agreement, was executed between the Naskapi Band and the two governments and other Crown Corporation signatories of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

On June 14, 1984, a special legislation was assented pursuant to Section 9 of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement and Section 7 of the Northeastern Quebec Agreement. This special legislation is known as the Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act.

On February 1, 1986, the Chairman and Commissioners were appointed. The founding members of the Commission were the Chairman Justice Réjean F. Paul, Superior Court Judge, Commissioner Mr. Robert Kanatewat and Commissioner Mr. Richard Saunders. The Chairman and the Commissioners appointments are based upon recommendation from the Grand Council of the Crees and the Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach. Presently, Mr. Richard Saunders is the Chairman, Mr. Philip Awashish is a Commissioner and Mr. Robert Kanatewat is a Commissioner with the longest standing tenure.

On August 4, 1986, the head office of the Cree-Naskapi Commission was established and its location was in Ottawa pursuant to an Order-In-Council 1986-2059 dated September 11, 1986. This Order-In-Council changed the location as designated in the Act.

The Cree-Naskapi Commission is and continues to be a neutral body to assist in solving issues that impede Aboriginal self-government.



on the team last year, and were dealing with some of the things rookies have to deal with while trying to make the jump from the minors to the NHL. This helped Cheechoo grow as a player and as a person.

In order to chase one's dream of becoming a professional hockey player, there has to be a certain number of sacrifices. Sending Cheechoo to Timmins to pursue his career at 14 was possibly the most important sacrifice his parents made for him.

"To have their support and to have them 100 per cent behind me meant a lot," Cheechoo says. "They came out whenever they could to watch me play. Knowing that I had their support really got my confidence up."

Unfortunately, he doesn't make it back to Moose Factory as much as he'd like because of his off-ice training. Whenever he does make it back, the reception is always warm. "It's pretty nice, everybody knows who I am, and they like to say hello and tell me how proud they are, but at the same time they try to give me my space."

He realizes that a lot of people are cheering for him, and following his every move. When he made the NHL, he became only the second Cree (Fred Saskamoose who played for the Blackhawks back in the 50s was the first) to make it to the big leagues.

"To have (my parents) support and to have them 100% behind me meant a lot."

There are a lot of adoring youngsters who watch him on TV, hoping he's not the last.

Cheechoo had these words of encouragement for them: "Anything is possible if you want it bad enough, and you work hard enough for it."

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FIRST FEMALE CREE DOCTOR

Darlene Kitty

by Steve Bonspiel

"Finding a role model or mentor is important because they could help you stay on track with your goals"

Well on her way to becoming the first female Cree medical doctor, Darlene Kitty is a true inspiration to everyone in Eeyou Istchee.

At this point, Kitty is slated to graduate in 2004 from the Family Medicine Residency Program at the University of Sudbury, but has just accepted a third-year position for extra training in Emergency Medicine through the same program. This extra training will go a long way in learning how to deal with the reality of northern towns like Chisasibi – her hometown.

Kitty has had to deal with her fair share of adversity over the years, the most heart-wrenching of which was the sudden loss of her twin sister. "She had collapsed at my parent's home and was brought to the hospital, and they tried to send her to Sudbury to get care there but she was deteriorating, so by the time they got her on the plane to get her there, it was too late." Because of the lack of oxygen to her brain, her sister was clinically brain-dead by the time they got her to the hospital. Kitty and her family had to make the decision to turn off the ventilator. "That was such a sudden thing and it was very difficult at the time," Kitty recalls. "I was totally shocked of course, and I thought to myself, 'Life is so short, it can be taken away from you in an instant.'"

This tragic incident is what changed her focus, and helped inspire her to become a doctor. "I was finishing my nursing degree that following spring and I decided that this is it, I have to do medicine because it's something I've always wanted to do, and if I ever died tomorrow, I don't want to regret not having tried to get into medical school. So it had a profound effect on my ambition. When I talk to kids about becoming a doctor, I always tell them about that story

because I hope it demonstrates to them how difficult life can be and the many different circumstances that people go through. There are personal struggles that we can overcome, and still achieve our dreams; if we use those difficulties to make us stronger."

Kitty says nursing has been a great experience for her. The profession taught her a lot about people, their illnesses and

"Life is so short, it can be taken away from you in an instant."

their struggles through cancer and with death. "Positive things, like having babies, are even more profound in that sense because you have the privilege of going through those experiences with the patients," she says.

The transition in becoming a doctor has been made much easier with her easy-going attitude. "I've always been interested in working with people, and I'm quite sociable in terms of activities that I do. Going out and participating in sports or getting involved with things at school, certain clubs or organizations."

Kitty has been known to play a little hockey now and again, having competed on a team in medical school called the Traumatically Hip. Although she doesn't have much time to play many games, activities like these are what make her feel part of the fold.

Kitty didn't need to look any further than her own backyard for a role model growing up. Her role models were the two people who shaped what she is today, and were there for her when she needed them: her parents. "They grew up in difficult circumstances, growing up in the bush," Kitty explains. "They wanted to raise the four of us (girls) with a good education, unfortunately that meant living away from them, but they encouraged me to go to university, and although I think they wanted me to come back up north sooner, I wanted to study and they understood. And now they're very happy and proud that I've become a doctor."

In her struggles to get into medical school she met who would be another important role model, Dr. John Big Canoe. "He always encouraged me in everything I did, especially when applying to medical school. I always remember what he told me, and I couldn't believe it when I got my letter (of acceptance). When I finally did get accepted it was by three out of the four medical schools I applied to."

Tragedy struck once again when Dr. Big Canoe passed away in a boating accident. Kitty was shocked, but she eventually came to terms with the loss and soon after found the strength to carry on.

Once she is finished her residency, Kitty hopes to eventually return to Chisasibi to practice medicine. The doctors who work there have to be skilled in many different aspects, from advanced cardiac life support to delivering babies. Getting

this extra training will bring Kitty to different places in and around the north, and then in a few years time, back home.

Kitty's advice for youngsters to succeed is this: "Finding a role model or mentor is important because they could help you stay on track with your goals, and talk you through difficult times like when you're homesick and you don't want to study and you want to come home. That was difficult for me, because I was 17 when I left home. I like to tell kids "don't listen to pessimists because people can tell you you'll never be anything", but I didn't have good marks and I wouldn't have been able to become a doctor if I listened to that."

"I've always been interested in working with people, and I'm quite sociable in terms of activities that I do."

"I like to tell people never give up, you might have a certain idea in your head and you want to be a doctor, a lawyer, or even an astronaut. You can do it if you keep trying, even if you fail a course, go back and do it again. You'll know better, and learn from your mistakes. I failed courses and had to go back and take them, but I refused to give up."

"You can do it if you keep trying."



Darlene with organizers at the 2003 Science Fair in Chisasibi



CONGRATULATIONS

on your 10th Anniversary

We are proud to support the Nation.

Your creativity, passion and tenacity enrich all of us!

I wish you all the best for continued success.



From the Crees of the Waskaganish First Nation &
Chief Robert Weistche.

Margaret Cromarty, Cree Renaissance Woman



Margaret and
husband William
at Fort George

by Steve Bonspiel

Margaret Cromarty, an accomplished writer, eco tourism guide, speaker and poet, has lived on the land most of her life, growing up on Fort George Island where there was no electricity or running water, and later moving to Chisasibi in 1981.

The move was not something she agreed with. "I didn't like it, I think the move was too much, to uproot everything I knew at the island was very hard. I lived by the coast and the one thing I missed the most was looking at James Bay from my home. I thought my life would never change, but it did."

That's why she still keeps a home on Fort George Island, where she runs her eco tourism business with her husband, William. They worked for Mandow agency for a number of years as eco tourism guides, and they have now been running their own venture for the last four years. Unfortunately, they have recently decided that because of their age, they are unable to continue and are now looking to sell the business.

Cromarty thoroughly enjoys teaching other people, especially the Europeans, about her Cree culture. She finds it funny how little they know about it. "I remember one time after eating lunch, a group of non-natives asked us where the dessert was, and I said, 'You just ate it, it was the bannock!'"

Her humour is evident by her response to the question, "How many books have you published?" She states, matter-

of-factly, "Oh, only three," with a chuckle. That's three more than the majority of people in Eeyou Istchee, and the rest of the world.

“ I REMEMBER ONE TIME
AFTER EATING LUNCH, A
GROUP OF NON-NATIVES
ASKED US WHERE THE
DESSERT WAS, AND I SAID
'YOU JUST ATE IT, IT WAS
THE BANNOCK'! ”

Cromarty will be looking to publish another book as soon as she can sell her eco tourism venture. She currently has enough material for at least one, possibly two more books.

Continued on Page 33



Conseil Cri de la santé et des services sociaux de la Baie James

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Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay

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A REFLECTION OF CREE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES:

A REFLECTION OF CREE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES:

* (Est. April 20th, 1978 by Order in
Council 1213-1978, Qc)

"Serving Eeyou Istchee Since 1978"

The signing of the 1975 Agreement (JBNQA) resulted in the establishment of two main service agencies in Eeyou Istchee, one on education the other on health and social services. The Cree Regional Board of Health and Social Services was established through an Order in Council on April 20, 1978.

The Cree Regional Board was established to act as the Regional Council with jurisdiction over the portion of the territory comprising Categories 1A and 1B lands; and the responsibility to administer the appropriate health and social services for all persons residing in territory designated at the time as Region 10B.

The Cree Health Board experienced its share of growing pains. From the gastroenteritis epidemic in 1980, to falling under trusteeship after only a few years in operations in 1984, it was a demanding but humbling period. From the onset, the Cree Health Board was chronically under-funded, under-resourced, compounded with delayed obligations, deteriorated facilities, as well as a nurse shortage followed by a doctor shortage in the late

photo: Beesum Communications

1990's. These ordeals partly triggered the Board to refuse the application of the new Act respecting health and social services (S4.2) in 1994.

In February 1999, the Cree leadership called to order a Special Assembly on Health and Social Services in Ouje-Bougoumou to address the Cree health and social services conditions. As a result, the Cree Nation expressed the need of a new direction and adopted the "Eeyou Vision Statement on Health and Social Services in Eeyou Istchee."

Following the Special Assembly, collaborated efforts between the Grand Council and the Cree Health Board to bring Quebec to a negotiating table intensified. It was revealed during that period that diabetes was becoming an epidemic in Eeyou Istchee. As the Cree negotiators prepared to initiate a public campaign on the province's lack of concern, the province accepted to enter into negotiations with the Crees to resolve Section 14 issues.

The signing of the Terms of Reference on November 10, 1999 between the Cree Health Board and the Ministry of Health and Social Services of Quebec was one of the first major breakthroughs. From there, a new diabetes funding, a new NIHB and Public Health agreements were successfully negotiated.

With the signing of the AIP and the subsequent Paix Des Braves Agreement, the health negotiations froze temporarily. By assurance the new agreement provided provisions guaranteeing the health file a priority and negotiations would resume following the signing of the final agreement. From that, the Board instigated a new strategy to undergo high-level, global approach negotiations.

Some may have considered it overly ambitious when the Board acquired the services of a high profile specialist in the health and social services network of Quebec to help develop the first comprehensive regional strategic plan of the Cree Health Board. The Board saw an opportunity and was determined to follow through.

The results to date are overwhelming, but the RSP

along with its implementation plan and the amount of energy already put into this process from all sides is a symbol of real progress. The Regional Strategic Plan not only sets realistic goals to realize the vision of the Cree Nation, but it is considered the blue print to the modernization of health and social services in Eeyou Istchee.

Still, there are enormous challenges ahead to arrive at a final agreement with the province by March 2004. The anticipated health agreement will propose to set new standards to health and social services delivery for the Eeyouch.

To build a suitable foundation for the Cree Health Board to meet the needs of today and tomorrow is a mountainous task. What is more challenging is the balancing of the western system and the inte-

gration of services, which would include the integration of Cree culture and Cree Traditional methods into an already complex system.

We are aware that the new system must be able to cope with the present and future health needs of the Cree Nation, but it must also be equipped to help ease the pains of the past and help undo a history compounded with traumatic events that took place prior to and during the residential school era. The displacement, and relocation of communities and events that

disrupted the Cree way of life within the last thirty years have also caused major social impacts. All this will require a solid organization with a system that will contribute to the healing of the Cree people.

Today, both the Crees and Quebec have an opportunity to set the record straight. This may very well be the Cree Health Boards' greatest opportunity to bring the services in Eeyou Istchee up to par with the rest of Quebec and setting real goals towards achieving a healthier nation. In order to set the standards to have more control and jurisdiction over health and social services in Eeyou Istchee, and integrating our culture into the services and ultimately becoming an aboriginal health organization model in Quebec and abroad is up to our partners in health and us.

*What is more
challenging is the
balancing of the western
system and the
integration of
Cree culture and Cree
Traditional methods*





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Growing up, Cromarty thought she'd be "nothing but a bush person." Then one day her true talent reared its head – writing stories, and poetry. It took a full seven years before she was able to find someone to publish her work.

She got the idea to become a writer out of necessity. "I was no longer taking care of my mother, and at that time I was in my 50s, and I knew nobody would hire me. Then I thought why not write? No matter how old you are, you never retire from that, although I never thought I'd actually make money on it, but I did."

Her three books are *Indian Legends and Poems*; *James Bay Memoirs*, *A Cree Woman's Ode to her Homeland* and *Cree Poems and Stories*.

Because of her newfound success, the Cree School Board hired her from time to time to travel to the other communities to discuss her local stardom and talk about her books. She was shy at first, never having before spoken in front of large crowds, but she quickly adapted and now enjoys it immensely. She has also been to different colleges and universities on the east coast, including an Ivy-League school, Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire.

"You have to go out and travel to promote yourself, and your book," Cromarty says. "Sometimes it's at schools, other times it's at gatherings, which I enjoy very much. People usually ask me about my work, or the Cree way of life, or sometimes they want to know about the dams and how the Cree people are coping with them."

Cromarty's first book was published by Waapoone Publishing and Promotion in Lakefield, Ontario. Waapoone is known for publishing Native books, and is always looking to encourage new Native writers. All of her work has also been translated into French.

“ I THOUGHT WHY NOT
WRITE? NO MATTER HOW
OLD YOU ARE, YOU NEVER
RETIRE FROM THAT. ”

Her most favorite poem she's ever written is titled "Trees." It was selected in a nationwide search to appear in a book along with other well-known Native poets from across Canada. By her estimate, there are at least 5,000 copies of her books circulating around the world.

Part of her inspiration when writing poetry was her mother. "My mother told me a lot of stories, and my parents lived such a hard life, and I thought why not write it down for people to learn about (life back then). I didn't write any sad stories, I wrote my stories so readers would enjoy it, and I enjoyed writing them too."

The Nation on its tenth anniversary

Hold on what is good you have our gratitude.

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*Let's hope the magazine (the Nation) stand the
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I'm forever thankful

Margaret Sam-Cromarty

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The Cree-Huron Arrow

by Steve Bonspiel

Kwanah Sioui-Moar, alias The Cree Arrow, is set to soar even higher in the coming year, thanks to much-needed experience gained in his first year in Senior Elite Mountain Biking.

Sioui-Moar finished a solid fourth in a Canada Cup race in Bromont this past May against racers from across Canada. This result enabled him to compete on the world stage at Mont Ste-Anne later the next month. Unfortunately, he was unable to finish due to mechanical problems. As a result of a few other DNF's (did not finish), he ended the season without enough races to qualify for an official rank.

*“Being recognized
by the Indian community was
a very very exciting thing
to have happen
in my life.”*

One of the things he hopes to work on is hiring a personal mechanic to help him out with these types of incidents. The big problem is cash; entering these races, as well as travelling expenses, and the aforementioned cost of a personal mechanic eats up a large amount of money. Even with numerous sponsors like Etnies, Spy Optic and Yeti bikes, Sioui-Moar still lacks the necessary funds to compete on the same financial level with most of the other racers. He did want to point out the fact that he also gets financial support from Josie Jimikin, the Chief of Nemaska, Gordon Blackned, the Director General of the Cree School Board and Marcel Happyjack, a youth Chief from Waswanipi. "Thanks to them I was able to go to Whistler to compete in the National Championships."

Son of a Cree father and a Huron mother, he feels the support of both Nations when he's racing. "There are people who follow my races that I don't even know," he says. "There are a lot of people on both sides who've helped me."

This support is what instills in him the confidence that's needed to win on every level he has ever competed on. He is used to success, having at one point won 21 out of 36 events he entered. Although the adjustment of his first year in Senior Elite brought him back down to earth a little bit.

His disappointing results from last year have been a vital learning experience that he has been able to use to his advantage. Next year, he will know what to expect, and along with the experience he gained, he feels that he will be



competitive enough to at least finish in the top five. He will be out to prove himself on the Senior Elite circuit starting in May 2004.

Along with his success came recognition as one of the Aboriginal Athletes of the Year by being presented with the Tom Longboat Award this past year. His name is synonymous with success, and it's becoming known throughout the Native world, and hopefully soon, throughout the rest of North America and the world. "Being recognized by the Indian community was a very, very exciting thing to have happen in my life."

When asked whom he looked up to as setting a great example for himself to follow, Sioui-Moar chose Jordin Tootoo, the first Inuit hockey player to make the NHL. "The speed bumps that he hit in his life, while still being able to get past that makes him a very good example to every young Aboriginal person."

The support he has received from the Huron village, from everyone in Eeyou Istchee, as well as from his family has been invaluable over the years. "People don't only support me by giving money, they support me by coming out to see me race, and in other ways."

Sioui-Moar has had a profound effect on aboriginal youth, as well. "When the other kids see me training and racing instead of going to a bar, it sets a good example. As much as people like to have fun, that's not all there is to life."

“ When the other kids see me training and racing instead of going to a bar, it sets a good example. ”



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*Félicitations
au journal the Nation
pour son 10^e Anniversaire!
Bon succès pour les Années à venir!*

*Congratulation to the Nation magazine
on it's 10th Anniversary
Much success for the years to come*

Crossing rivers & dotting 'i's

by Lyle Stewart

There comes a moment when you know you've crossed a threshold. Or, in my case, a river. Not the proverbial Rubicon, but the Papas, way up on the northern end of Lac Mistissini.

This was no triumphant crossing on the back of a stallion. But a less-than-elegant hitchhike on the back of Glen Wapachee, at the time an Ouje-Bougoumou band councilor.

You see, this was my first trip up to Cree country, more than six years ago, to fish in paradise for walleye and speckled trout. Only this city boy didn't bring any rubber boots.

the opportunity to continue to do journalism that appeals to the heart as well as the head. To add a little attitude and spice to the sometimes mundane meat and potatoes of providing an independent media voice to a very special community.

It's an exciting project, even after 10 years, and especially for a semi-outsider like myself. The Cree of James Bay are on the cutting edge of political and social change in Canada. And at The Nation, we have a front-row seat.

It makes for interesting discussion and debate in the newsroom, especially over the past couple of years. A good deal

It was also my first taste of Cree culture...
and humour.

And that made crossing water, even shallow water, a little difficult.

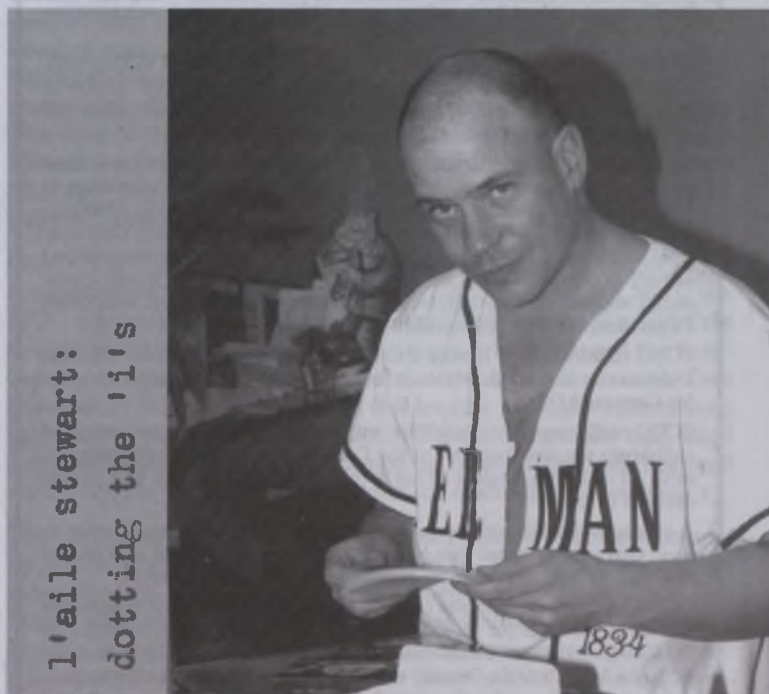
So Glen volunteered to carry me across. I accepted, and will never live it down. Crees up and down the river pointed and laughed and I now laugh whenever I think back to the great first impression I made.

I was there as a guest of my friend, Will Nicholls, and to write a story for Hour magazine on the burgeoning Cree tourism industry and how Europeans were flocking to experience Native culture.

It was also my first taste of Cree culture... and humour. Now I get it every other week in the Nation office as copy editor and titular member of the magazine's editorial board. That's why I have a special status. Depending on their mood, people here call me the "consultant," or, "the white chief", when they really don't like the way I edited their copy. You see, I'm the guy responsible for taking out all the capital letters from every second word, for making sure all the commas are in the right place, and, most important, to ensure the Nation doesn't get sued into bankruptcy.

It's a fine line to walk. As someone who's worked in alternative journalism most of his professional life, I believe in the value of writing with a point of view. Back at my student newspaper 20 years ago already, we called ourselves "agents of social change," whatever that might have meant. But I still believe. I believe we have a responsibility to cover all points of view, but that we are dishonest – and doing a disservice to our readers – if we try to hide our own biases.

That's part of the appeal of working here, even though I now work full-time in the so-called mainstream media. It's



of that ends up in the magazine, adding to the mix of views, news and diatribes we've become known for.

A tenth anniversary is a little like crossing a river in itself. It's a marker in time, one that may be a little arbitrary, but one that nonetheless announces that you've come somewhere, and survived. Not without a few scars and assorted battle wounds along the way. But this issue is a birthday party of sorts that says the Nation is here to stay.



The Cree Construction and Development Company Ltd

November 13, 2003

Following certain comments made on our behalf at the Annual General Assembly in Waskaganish a few weeks ago. The Cree Construction and Development Company would like the opportunity to show the Cree Nation the beneficial impacts it has had for Cree employees and Cree businesses. Under its new administration CCDC has made considerable efforts in assuring that these contracts benefit its shareholders, that is to say members of the Cree Nation.

In August 2003 Crees represented 59% of all our employees on our CCQ contracts which are mainly at EM-1. It is with great pride that we can say that since we began these contracts we have always maintained our Cree manpower percentage at above 50% since July last year. In August 2003, one hundred and four (104) Crees were employed on our CCQ contracts.

As of April 01, 2003 to October 2003 CCDC has paid approximately \$5 624 000.00 in salaries to our Cree employees under CCQ regulations.

CCDC-Normes is responsible for works carried out in the communities and elsewhere directly under Cree Construction, these are separate from works carried out by our joint ventures who also create a lot of employment in their respective communities and elsewhere. In CCDC Normes forty five (45) Crees make up for 38.1% of our employees in CCDC Normes.

In the Administration of CCDC, twenty one (21) Crees account for 37.5% of the employees. With Crees studying in various fields such as engineering and other construction trades we are very confident that this number will increase greatly in the coming years.

Gestion ADC is a division of CCDC and it counts one hundred and seven (107) Crees as its employees for August 2003. Gestion ADC is a catering and janitorial service provider which is also devoted to creating Cree employment.

In all two hundred and eighty seven (287) Crees were working for CCDC at the end of August 2003.

In the fiscal year ending March 31, 2003 CCDC provided to Cree subcontractors, companies and service providers over \$ 17 000 000.00 in business. An additional \$5 000 000.00 from April 01, 2003 to the end of August 2003 has been attributed.

In addition to hiring Crees, we are committed to training our Cree employees to allow them to obtain the knowledge and experience to occupy more of the management positions. We are training construction superintendents, foremen, Human resources personnel, Cost control technicians, accounting personnel (payroll, payables, receivables) as well as others. CCDC would like to acknowledge the much appreciated support we have received from the Cree Human Resources Department and its personnel.

CCDC in addition to having a Cree President, now has two (2) Cree Directors at the administration level and one (1) Assistant Director for Gestion ADC.

CCDC will continue its effort and commitment to promote and encourage the development of the Cree workforce and Cree businesses in all of Eeyou Istchee. This is part of our philosophy and we are devoted to this.

A comment made by a non-cree SEBJ employee was especially nice to hear, this person stated that he had never seen or heard of a project of this size with as many native people and native participation.

CCDC has gone beyond the call of duty in some cases as it is with the tax exemption file for all Crees and other native peoples working at the EM-1 worksites. CCDC made a significant contribution in this file with the Ministère du Revenu who consequently gave us a favourable opinion that allows the Crees and other natives at EM-1 to work and have their right to being exempt from taxation respected.

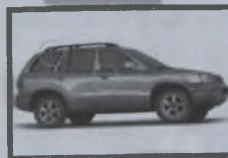
We hope that this clarifies the situation and our efforts. As for our Cree and non-Cree employees, CCDC would like to thank everyone for the hard work and devotion you have demonstrated. We would also like to thank the NATION for allowing us to share this information in their magazine.

In conclusion we would like to encourage all students studying in construction related areas to persevere and succeed as we will need you in the coming years! We are also taking applications for the coming year. Our fax number is 1-418-923-2050, send them to Maggie M. Spencer.

Wachiya,
Robert Baribeau
Human Resources Director - CCDC

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Cree Nation of Wemindji

History and Relocation

Prior to the establishment of the current Community of Wemindji, the Wiinibek Eeyou gathered at Paakumshumwaashtikw, which literally translates as "Where the River Spills Out" and is otherwise known as Old Factory. Old Factory is located approximately thirty (30) miles south of present day Wemindji and is a prime fishing area, which also traditionally served as a gathering place for friends and families, the conducting of marriage arrangements, trading, and several cultural ceremonies.

In 1959, the members of the Old Factory Band relocated to Wemindji on the north side of the mouth of the Maquatua River and lies within the Atsynia family's trapline. The late John Georgekish, who was Chief at the time, is recognized as the founder of Wemindji. The Department of Indian Affairs soon began constructing cedar homes for the members and in 1962 the nursing station was built and is currently still in use. Wemindji is still waiting for the provincial government to approve the construction of a new clinic.

The People of Wemindji

Wemindji is more than just houses and buildings. It is the people that make Wemindji a Community, the youth, elders, men, women, children and grandchildren. It is the Community events that bring us together in times of celebration and in times of sorrow. The elders are the foundation of our communities, and in honor of them we highlight those that reached special milestones in their married lives. They have shown us the meaning of the words, Love, Faith, Integrity, Commitment, Patience and Forgiveness.

During the summer of 1939, David & Harriet Georgekish were married and have been together now for over 64 years. Clifford & Emily Georgekish celebrated their 60th Wedding Anniversary this year and were married on September 25, 1943. John & Ella Matches also celebrated their 60th Anniversary on August 4th and Simeon & Sophia Georgekish celebrated their 61st Anniversary on September 29. May their love and commitment be an example to others, especially in a world where many marriages are not able to stand the test of time.

Governance Project

One of the main projects undertaken during the past three (3) years has been a Governance Project. This project had spent over a year consulting with the people. There were two basic questions asked: What is a "good government"? and What do you want to see in Wemindji in 25 years? The goal is to have a Cree Government that is fair, transparent and accountable to the people. Consultation sessions were held with different focus groups, such as youth, elders, teachers, trappers, former Council Members, the employed and the unemployed. All of the information gathered was put together to form a foundation for the Principles of Good Government.

As this project continues, it will develop Conflict of Interest Guidelines, Code of Ethics and update and the Community's Election By-Law. It will also serve as a foundation for developing new projects and programs based on the priorities and needs of the people. One of the major accomplishments was that we were able to collect information on the main capital projects and programs the Community Members wish to be implemented over the next 5 years. With this information, we developed our 3-year and 5-year Capital Projects Plan, which was presented and approved by the Band Members at this year's Annual General Assembly.

Some of the main highlights of previous capital projects constructed during the past 10-year period include the expansion of infrastructure, 67 new housing units, the renovation of more than 30 older-housing units, the renovation and expansion of the Mawabou Gardens Arena and the Maquatua Eeyou School, aerated lagoon, resurfacing of the airport runway, construction of the access road. The Cree Nation of Wemindji and the Cree Regional Authority collaborated efforts to ensure the construction of a new Daycare "Kanawhymigoo Childcare Centre" which now has a permit for 65 children; 13 infants and 52 children aged 18 months and older.

One of the major capital projects Wemindji is most proud of is the completion of the drainage and paving of our roads. In 2001, the MOU Agreement was finalized and signed between the nine (9) Cree Communities and the Quebec Government, which released the funding for our projects. There were numerous people in each Cree Community that were involved in this lengthy process which include the past and present Chiefs and Council Members and the local Band Administrators, the Grand Council of the Crees/Cree Regional Authority, the Cree Health Board and the Community Members.

Tawich Development Corporation, an economic development company which is owned by the Cree Nation of Wemindji has seen the establishment of Sibi Enterprises, which includes Sibi Gas, Sibi Repair Shop and Sibi Hardware all in one building; the Community Store; a local grocery and bakery, Wemindji Exploration Inc., a junior mining exploration company; Tawich Construction Inc., a local construction company. Tawich Construction has had a rocky start, however it is slowly becoming a more profitable company. Two (2) years ago, it purchased an asphalt plant, which was used to pave the community's roads. It has also secured contracts outside of Wemindji and will become a new division of the company in years to come.

Tawich Development Corporation also owns Air Wemindji Inc., Beesum Petroleum, Maquatua Inn, and 50% of Kepa Transport and 35% of Eenou Drilling Inc. Some of the new local businesses which recently started include; Sam's Video and Coffee Shop owned by Samuel Georgekish, Georgekish Trucking, owned by Philip and Gilbert Georgekish and Kookum Sarah's Bed & Breakfast, owned by Candace and Donna Danyluk.

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Trapline Tale: A Will to Change

by Danielle Valade

Harry Capissisit's last wishes were simple: to leave his trapline to his sister. Upon his death in 2002, because there were no other men in his family, he wanted to pass trapline W15 to his 68-year-old sister Jane, and later to her grandson Steve Coulombe. However, Harry's wish is controversial.

The Cree Trappers Association (CTA) believes that the main principles of land ownership are to keep traditional law and order, to ensure that the land is not abused, and to oversee the sharing of the wealth of the land. Traditionally, a trapline is passed on to the most knowledgeable member of the family, the one who can best care for the land. According to the CTA, that person is always a man. Therefore, it's a delicate situation when a woman asks for a trap line. The men have rarely faced this situation and are taken aback by it. Jane wants to honour the wishes of her late brother and to live off the family land that she knows so well. She wants to finish her days on the land where she was born.

"My mother was my role model...She worked as hard as any man at our family camp."

Jane Ella Capissisit is a Cree elder born February 1st, 1935 on the family trap line. As a youth the family lived in the bush. Jane never went to school, and always lived a traditional lifestyle. Her father died while she was very young, before she ever got a chance to know him. Her mother was the sole provider and the teacher of the family. "My mother was my role model," Jane remembers. "She patiently taught us everything about our traditional lifestyle, and the hunting, trapping and fishing skills. She worked as hard as any man at our family camp when my late brother Harry was still small and unable to do heavy chores."



Jane's family moved from Old Post to the new Waswanipi community in 1965 and lived by the river in tents, waiting for housing that finally came in 1976. Jane is a bush woman, quite capable of surviving off the land.

The decision on Harry Capissisit's trapline is still pending at the CTA in Waswanipi. Following a CTA meeting in October Jane mentioned, "I was shown a map of our land and I signed for my land. I don't know what that means." She believes that this signature means she is now a tally woman, but the outcome is still unclear. The CTA will discuss the W15 trapline December 3, when they will poll members of the association to find out if Jane will get the land. Jane is sad about the uncertainty of this apparent setback. "I thought that I would grieve to death if I would lose the land," she says. "I feel I would leave my people and relatives, go away from Waswanipi if they take away our land. I would feel so betrayed."



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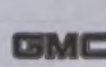
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Jane Capissit is facing the common reality of Native women over the past five centuries: an accepted mindset of patriarchy and colonization. The first Europeans to arrive in Canada were surprised by the positions of power held by Aboriginal women in their societies. European women did not enjoy this status. It was not long before these men realized that in order to "civilize" the land and the people occupying it, they needed to remove the status and power of women.

Thus today, a Cree trapper interviewed for this story (who prefers not to be named) can ask, "Why mess with rules that have been working for thousands of years? The traditional role of male domination of the land." To such a statement one may respond that every aspect of life itself is in constant evolution. Traditions are useful as long as they do not infringe on the basic freedoms and rights of women and men.

In the book, *Strong Women Stories: Native Vision and Community Survival*, Emma LaRoque writes that women "must ask ourselves whether and to what extent tradition is liberating to us as women." For women who have always been connected to their communities, it can be doubly difficult to question a patriarchal status quo. But author Kim Anderson writes that aboriginal women were traditionally highly respected and their opinions trusted. "They were often pivotal in the ultimate decision's outcome, because their primary responsibility was the well being of the children, their descendants generations away," Anderson notes. "Similarly, women had to provide for themselves and their families in the absence of a man. Native women had to learn essential trapping and hunting skills, and many contemporary women recall watching their grandmothers hunt, fish and trap."

"I thought that I would grieve to death... if I would lose the land. That's how unhappy I was."

Jane Capissit's experience bears this out. "I am often called upon to speak as an elder, teach and show techniques such as making traditional handicrafts, walking-out ceremony outfit and beaded moccasins," she observes. "I want to teach our children pride in their culture. I look forward to having other women follow this path if they get in the same kind of situation I am. I hope they fight and not give up until they succeed."

Right now Jane Capissit is in the bush, on her beloved land, waiting to learn if, indeed, there is a will to change – a change that respects the past.

"The old ones tell us that "grand-mother once owned half of the circle, and we had balance in our lives." Today, the violence, abuse and dishonor of women are often overwhelming, leaving communities raw and hurting. If we are ever to achieve self-government, the priority to restore the old balance must be more than paying lip service to the cliché that "women are sacred" Let us challenge ourselves to tear down patriarchal and colonized traditions which demean women and keep our people down."

Maria Campbell,
author, playwright and teacher

Many native women speak freely about the sexism that is operating within many contemporary Native families, communities and organizations. In the midst of these gender disparities, however, it is uncommon to hear Native women simply blame men for their condition. I think many native women are aware that the social problems that hit them the hardest are the outcome of colonization. The struggle, then, becomes a struggle against the system, policies and institutions that were enforced upon us by the colonizer. It is not a simplistic struggle against men or individuals.

From the book *A Recognition of Being / Reconstructing Native Womanhood*
Edited by Kim Anderson & Bonita Lawrence

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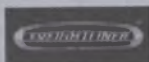
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Whapmagoostui Art Factory: a success story

By Sonny Orr

How old do you have to be, to be in business? How many years do you have to try before you succeed at a business venture? Why would anyone want to go into business in the first place?

These are all questions one usually asks oneself before going into business. The usual answers tell stories of entrepreneurs who are old and near retirement after a lifetime of struggling to make ends meet. The reason for going into business in the first place is usually to meet a certain need for certain people with those needs. For example, a restaurant owner who serves food to those who don't want to do dishes, to those people who don't have time to cook, or to those who are traveling and don't have access to their own comfy kitchen. Most of the time, people go into business for many different reasons, like, I need a job, I want to be self reliant, I don't like my boss and I want to be my own boss. These are all the usual reasons.

Most people who go into business often have to learn how to do it on their own. The Whapmagoostui Art Factory is a rare example of a business that doesn't meet all the usual expectations of a business success story. What defines success? Is it the amount of money you have at the end of the day? In the case of the Whapmagoostui Art Factory, it is the learning experience and the chance to learn how to do business within a school environment that makes this enterprise unique among Aboriginal businesses.

It all started in 1999 when a teacher at the Badabin Eeyou School in Whapmagoostui, Robert Savoie, noticed that the students seemed to have a natural talent for art. "They are inspired by their intimate knowledge of their culture and it shows in their art," Savoie said.

In the classroom, which spawned the Whapmagoostui Art Factory, evidence of this statement is everywhere, with the essential goose and wildlife portrayals, the sunsets and campsites hanging up on the walls. As they work on their own indi-



vidual pieces, they add on their own knowledge of their identity and at the same time, learn of another culture. Leonardo da Vinci is one inspiration for the students, as they are amazed that an old man who died hundreds of years ago had such knowledge of the human body, of technology and of art. It was one particular work that showed the human fetus in the womb that awed the students and got them going to learn about the evolution of the human child in pre-infancy stages.

It was the integration of two programs that were eventually phased out by the Quebec education ministry (Career Choice and Personal Social Development) that made the program possible. Now Raymond Savoie, a teacher who has many years of living in Whapmagoostui, likes to call it the Personal Social Artistic Development program. Where does the business end up mixed in with art at a school, one may ask? Another program that helps students in secondary school learn and understand the basic elements of business, entrepreneurship and management, helped Raymond teach his class just what it takes to make a buck. As a business, the Whapmagoostui Art Factory has been awarded many times and most recently

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gained recognition from the federal and provincial governments as the "entrepreneur of the year," something normally reserved for large companies run by people with extensive business experience and education. There are many other awards that the Art Factory is proudly showcasing in the foyer of the Badabin Eeyou School.

As a business, the Art Factory is a learning experience, where business cards, invoices, sales, promotion and marketing are all part of being an entrepreneur. There isn't much more that your ordinary enterprise does to promote their work. In fact, they have their own website (www.geocities.com/badabin99/WAF.html), which inspired another Cree School in Waskaganish to request the Whapmagoostui Art Factory to come show students how they made their business a success, leading them to create their own art factory.

ROBERT SAVOIE, NOTICED THAT THE STUDENTS SEEMED TO HAVE A NATURAL TALENT FOR ART. "THEY ARE INSPIRED BY THEIR INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR CULTURE AND IT SHOWS IN THEIR ART,"

Many of the students don't have solid opportunities to earn a secure future in the community and come from troubled homes, but the Art Factory gives them a glimmer of hope of their real potential. For example, Savoie says that one of his students "was amazed when I gave him \$30. It was a sale from one of the trips the class made to Montreal for one of their exhibitions. 'Why did they buy this?' he asked me, and I told him that it was good art and someone was willing to pay for that. So I think that this made an impression on this student, who otherwise didn't have much going for him when he left the class...."

It is this show of support from buyers and interested collectors that make the Art Factory worthwhile as an education process. At the moment, students of the art class are diligently working on various pieces that reflect the beliefs of the people and will be showcased in the new gathering place or church building that the Whapmagoostui Band and municipality of Kuujjuarapik have built for their community. The Whapmagoostui Art Factory is indeed, a success story.



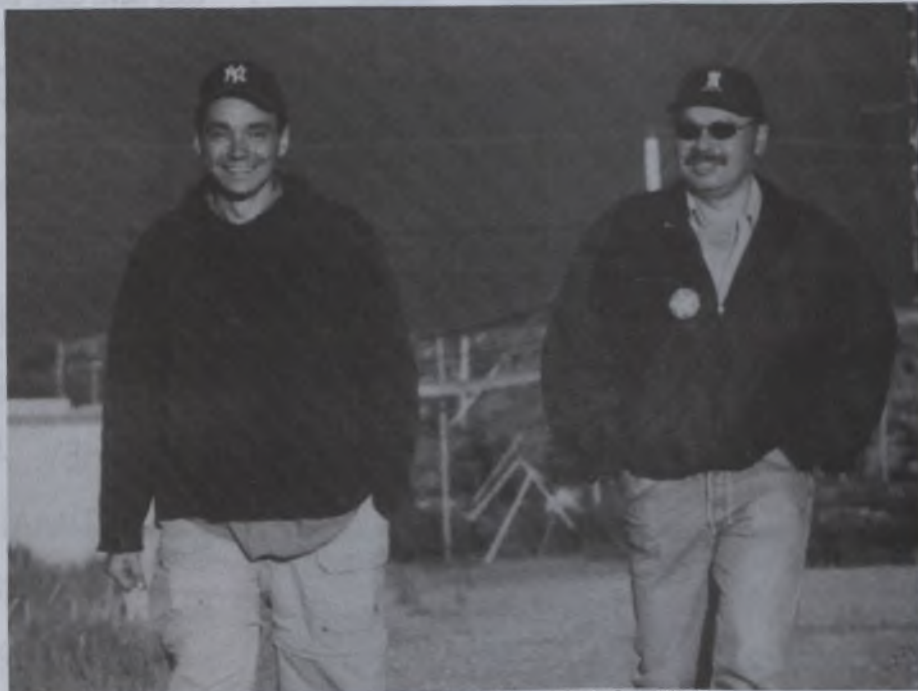
Ernest Webb and Neil Diamond shooting the Cree language documentary; Cree Spoken Here, at Smokey Hill on the Rupert River.



Catherine Bainbridge in the earliest days of the Nation.



An early photo of the Nationites.



Nation publisher Ernest Webb and Sonny Orr in Great Whale, after hours of intense salary negotiations for Rez Notes.



Editor in Chief Will Nicholls on the campaign trail in Chisasibi with two unidentified ladies. Shockingly, Will came in last again.



Fearless editorial board member Lyle Stewart.



Salesperson Christina Groom and designer Mona Laviolette



The Cree nation's first pin-up girl, Nian Matoush.

10

Years of...

The Nation, as any family does, has for the past 10 years shot and collected hundreds of photos. Here for your viewing pleasure, we bring you the people who have worked, and played, with the magazine for the past ten years. Some have come and gone on to better things. Some, like me, have stayed still searching for better things.



The intrepid investigative reporter Alex Roslin on the shore of Hudson Bay. Roslin was investigating the mysterious overnight appearance of a large bay, about 15 kms north of Great Whale. Community members witnessed a large fireball fall, a black helicopter, and men claiming to be from NASA.



Katerina Cizek, Rhonda Sherwood, Linda Ludwick, Mike Ryan and Eric Wapachee devour birthday cake.



Cree editor Brian Webb emerges from the closet. Brian still works collecting legends.



Current Nation reporter Tamara Ainscow (tsa) and former Nation reporter Brian Zelnicker.



Identities revealed: two notorious authors of the now defunct Horrroscope, Thelma and Louise.



Former student reporter Brian Brousseau and Beesum project manager Séri Jacobs



Rapid Lake's Billie Joe Ratt served an all too brief stint as our administrative assistant.



The Nation's hippest, and only Aaron gets his from leggy Jennifer Westlake.



The Nation's latest dynamic duo, reporter Steve Bonspiel and photographer Danielle Valade.



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Roman Catholic Mission - FGHCCP



Long before the arrival of the Europeans, Fort George Island stood as a place of summer gathering for the Cree and Inuit. After the arrival of the Anglican and Catholic missionaries in the early 1800's, it was then that the natives began to settle on the island so their children could attend school.

The people of Fort George were a quiet people who lived their lives going out on the land for most of the year and only coming to the island in the summer to gather with other friends and relatives. However, as the churches

became more active on the island some people stayed in Fort George all year.

The once small town of Fort George with its tepees became a place with a store, churches and trading posts. The tepees that were once so numerous changed to tiny scattered houses.

By the early nineteen seventies, the town of Fort George thrived with businesses and its economic development was growing. New buildings were constructed and Fort George was becoming a very large community.

In 1975 the James Bay Hydro Electric Project was signed much to the dismay of many of the residents of Fort George, for it meant that the entire community (that was so loved by its people) would be relocated because the people were told that the island could possibly become flooded.

So in 1980-81 the entire town of Fort George was moved to its new location which is now called Chisasibi (Big River).

Since the move, people gather each summer at Fort George Island and celebrate the past and the way that life was long ago on the island.

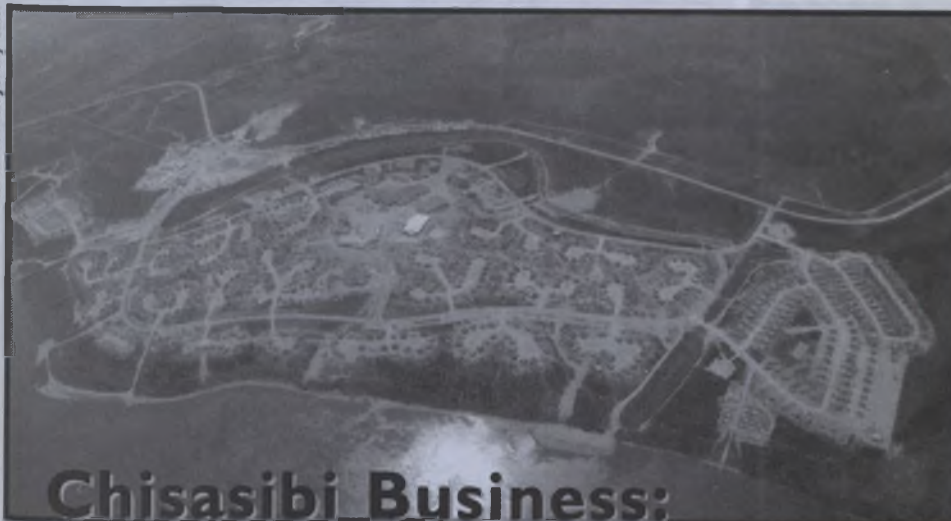


Photo Credit:
Anglican Church of Canada - FGHCCP

WACHIYA FROM CHISASIBI

Chisasibi is a vibrant, young community. Since its relocation from the island of Fort George in 1980-81, it has continued to grow rapidly. The population is comprised of approximately 3800 Cree people and about 500 non-native people as well as a small Inuit population. An elected Chief and Council administer the Cree Nation of Chisasibi offices.

Here is a list of businesses and services that contribute to the daily life in Chisasibi and a list of annual events that show how dynamic Chisasibi is:



**Congratulations to
"the Nation" on your
10th Anniversary.**

**Wishing you
continued success!**

**Chief and Council -
Cree Nation of Chisasibi**

Chisasibi Business:

Construction

Chee-Bee Construction
Utaapaan Construction
Cree Construction
Chee-Bee Cree Construction

Restaurants

Gookum's Kitchen
Sub-Zero Restaurant
Niskafe Coffee Shop
Joe's Snacks and Pool Hall
Several Chipstands
Christopher Pash's Pizza
Quachegan Coffee Shop

Stores

Northern Stores Inc
Chistapitin True Value
Hardware
CO-OP (groceries)
Chisasibi Enterprises
(General Store)
Boutique Cha-Ca-Jo

Radio, Cable and Internet

Ginwat Cable & Internet
Chisasibi Radio Station
Télébec

Motel

Chisasibi Motel

Airline

Air Creebec

Banks

First Nation Bank (TD)
CIBC

Gas Stations

Pimiiukimk
Pimii Coop

Tourism

Nouchimi Tourism
Fort George Island Tours
Mandow Agency

Video Store

VJ's Video and Chisasipizza
Northern Video

Garages

Bruno's Towing
Eeyou Whiskeychan Ikimikw
Municipal Garage

Taxis

Martinhunter Taxi
Snowboy Taxi
Rupert Taxi
Picard Taxi

Services:

Chisasibi Chief and Council
Elders Council of Chisasibi
Youth Council of Chisasibi
Chisasibi Inuit Association
Chisasibi Sports and
Recreation Association
Cree Nation of Chisasibi -
Town Maintenance, etc.
Cree Board of Health and
Social Services of James Bay
Cree School Board
James Bay Eeyou School -
elementary and
secondary school
Sabtuan Adult Education
James Bay Eeyou Corporation
Chisasibi Police Force
Chisasibi Courtroom
Canada Post
Chisasibi Fire Department/
Public Safety
Chisasibi Hospital
Hydro-Quebec
Télébec phone
Chisasibi Centre Inc.
(commercial centre)
Chisasibi Business and Development
Group
Chisasibi Business
Service Centre
Cree Human Resources
Department
Government of Quebec
Social Assistance Office
St. Philip's Anglican Church
Ste-Therese Catholic Church
Chisasibi Air Strip
Nav Canada Radar Installation
Income Security Program Office
Cree Trappers' Association

Wildlife Protection Office
Anjabowa Daycare Centre
Weesapou Group Home
Fitness Centre
Job's Memorial Gardens (Arena)

Events:

Mamoweedow (summer gather
ing on Fort George Island)
Multi-Cultural Day
Christmas Parade
Sports Tournaments (softball,
volleyball, basketball, hockey,
broomball)
Skating Club Ice Show
Square Dance Competition
Fishing Derbies
Winter Carnival
Chisasibi Birthday Celebrations -
August 18th
Canada Day Celebrations
Pow Wow

Buildings going up for 2003/2004:

Makivik Multi-purpose Centre
for Inuit population
second Childcare Centre
Cultural Centre - museum
Cree Construction office building
Cree Health Board
Multi-purpose Centre
Airport terminal building
Youth Centre

Housing going up for 2003/2004:

Approximately 12 Cree Nation
housing units
Several private homes -
Home Ownership Program

As you can see, Chisasibi is a unique, busy and active community. Its location offers outdoor enthusiasts many different activities such as hunting, fishing, trapping, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, hiking, and much more...

THE CREE MINERAL
EXPLORATION
BOARD



CONSEIL CRI SUR
L'EXPLORATION
MINÉRALE

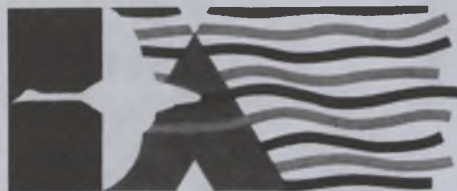
The Cree Mineral Exploration Board was created as a result of the signed agreement (Paix de Braves) between the Cree Nation and the Quebec Government. A five year implementation agreement was signed for funding purposes between the Cree Regional Authority, Cree Mineral Exploration Board and the Quebec Government.

The main purposes of CMEB includes amongst others the following:

- 1) assist the Crees in accessing mineral exploration opportunities;
- 2) facilitate the development of mineral exploration activities by Cree Enterprises;
- 3) Facilitate and encourage the access by the Crees and Cree Enterprises to regular Quebec program funding and other encouragements for mineral exploration activities;
- 4) Act as an entry mechanism for offers of services by Crees and Cree Enterprises in the field of mineral exploration.

Furthermore and according to the Annual Program of Activities – CMEB (2003-2004), the board promotes, initiate and support training programs, and furnish assistance to job development, placement. The CMEB provides also geological and geosciences based expertise to the communities and the individual exploration. This includes guidance to the geosciences data and environmental impacts assessment.

If you are a Cree and are considering to submit a proposal to the CMEB please get in touch with the Chief Geologist Youcef Larbi in Wemindji at 819-978-0264 extension #327. The next meeting of the board is scheduled for November 28th, 2003.



WACHIYA

Cree Arts & Crafts

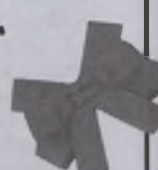
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Merry Christmas
& a Happy New Year



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*Congratulations
on 10 years reporting in the Cree community.*

Here's to another 10!



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on its "10th Anniversary Issue, the passage of time..."

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DO NOT MESS WITH



DR. TOOTOO

by Steve Bonspiel

"YOU JUST HAVE TO WORK AS HARD AS YOU CAN, AND TRY TO STAY FOCUSED ON WHAT YOU WANT TO ACCOMPLISH."

Rankin Inlet's Jordin Tootoo is making a big splash with the NHL's Nashville Predators these days. He had the distinction of becoming the first Inuk to play in the NHL when he suited up for his first National Hockey League game last October 9 against the Mighty Ducks of Anaheim.

Tootoo is considered small by NHL standards (5'9", 190 pounds) but he plays with the reckless abandon of a football player. His reputation around the league is that of a punishing hitter who will sacrifice his body for the success of his team. His rugged play helped Tootoo become a part of the Canadian World Junior Hockey team earlier this year that won a silver medal at the World Championships in Halifax.

Despite his young age (20), Tootoo has had his share of adversity in his personal life. Along with having the pressure of becoming the first Inuk player in the NHL, Tootoo's brother,

Terence, 22 at the time, took his own life August 28, 2002. This was very difficult on him, but he knew he had to persevere. Dealing with this type of tragedy has only made Tootoo stronger, and more dedicated to becoming a successful player in honour of his brother.

The rising number of Aboriginal players in the league is encouraging to Tootoo. According to Nativehockey.com, there are at least 14 players in the NHL right now that are of Aboriginal heritage. These numbers include players who are full-status, non-status, Inuit, or Metis. His being a part of that list is something he hopes will bring more Natives into the league, especially those with an Inuit background.

"I think it's great, if it encourages other natives to work towards that (getting into the NHL) then great," Tootoo says in an interview. "It just takes hard work and mental strength."



On behalf of the

Assembly of First Nations, I would like to salute *The Nation* on its tenth anniversary issue.

Communication is one of the most important tools First Nations possess to develop opportunities for self-reliance. Combining the tools of communication with First Nations ingenuity and solid professionalism has provided First Nations across Quebec and Canada with a publication that reflects the James Bay Cree reality in a relevant and well-crafted manner.

Congratulations to Beesum Communications for producing ten years' worth of The Nation. We look forward to many more.

Phil Fontaine
National Chief

Assembly of First Nations

Happy 10th Anniversary Nation Magazine



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HE EARNED
THE NICKNAME
DR. TOOTOO
BECAUSE OF THE
NUMBER OF OPPOS-
ING PLAYERS HE'S
SENT TO THE
HOSPITAL

The hardest thing Tootoo is still trying to get used to the mental aspect of the game. "That's the toughest part, getting used to dealing with the media, and dealing with all the distractions that come with being in the NHL."

Tootoo was already used to the different culture down south, having played for the Brandon Wheat Kings of the WHL for four years. Racism was one of the things he definitely had to deal with in junior, but he says that he hasn't encountered those types of incidents in the NHL yet.

Thus far into his career, Tootoo has not signed any large endorsement contracts, though this will almost surely change in the coming years.

Tootoo has a few nicknames, one of which he earned in Brandon while playing for the Wheat Kings: Dr. Tootoo. He earned this name because of the number of opponents he sent to the hospital from the ice.

He admits he isn't really looking too far into the future concerning his NHL career. "I'm just going to play every game as it comes," he says. "I don't know what the future holds, so all I can do is play for the present."

Tootoo says he hasn't been in Nashville long enough to have any close friends on the team, but the team as a whole already feel like his family. "They're a great bunch of guys, and I felt comfortable right from the start."

Most of his teammates are fascinated by his background, and can't believe that some of his favorite foods include whale blubber and walrus. These meats are something they've never seen, let alone eaten, in their lives.

It's been said that when young people from the north (Cree or Inuit) move down south to pursue a different life, they lose their culture, and their connection to the land. Tootoo disagrees.

"I don't believe that," he says. "I'm still who I am. Just because I'm in Nashville doesn't mean I've lost the way I lived before (as a Native person). I still hunt and fish, and I enjoy it as much as I did when I lived there (in Rankin Inlet)."

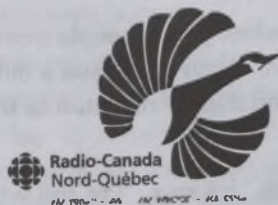
Getting back to his family home is something Tootoo tries to do as often as he can. This can sometimes be difficult because of the amount of training that goes into playing hockey for a living, and the lack of facilities up north.

Tootoo sometimes gets around this by using his own training regiment. Hauling water jugs, climbing a 100-foot hill, and using various other methods to keep in shape are part of that regimen. When he does get back he says it almost feels like he's never left.

He firmly believes that anyone who puts their mind to accomplishing their goals, even if it doesn't necessarily involve hockey, can do it. "You just have to work as hard as you can, and try to stay focused on what you want to accomplish."

"I THINK IT'S
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TOWARDS THAT (GET-
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THEN GREAT. IT JUST
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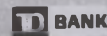
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TRIBUTE TO JOSEPH SHECAPIO-BLACKSMITH

BY THE
OUJÉ-BOUGOUMOU
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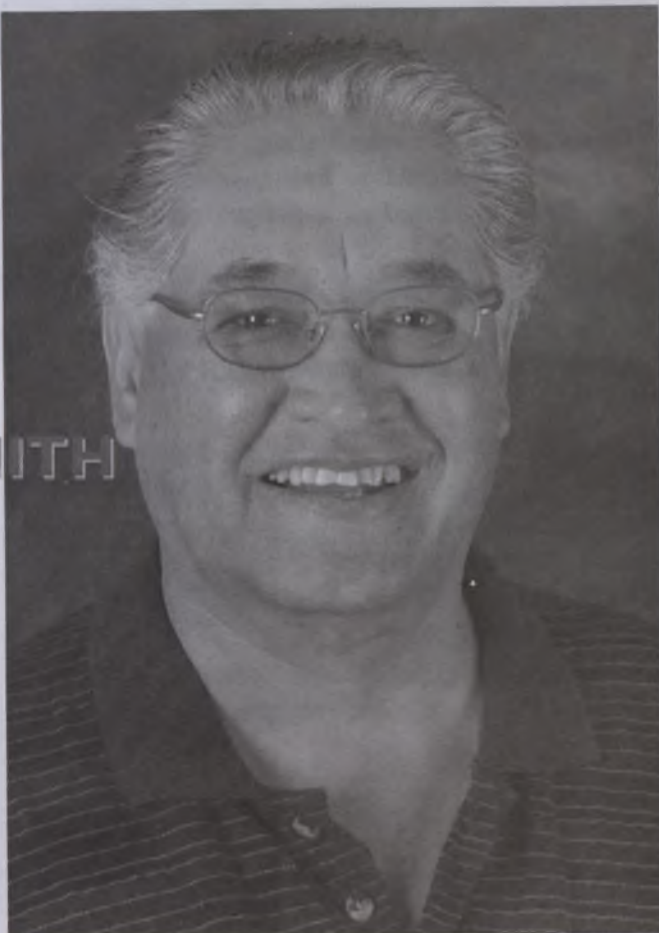


The Oujé-Bougoumou community deeply mourns the passing of Joseph Shecapio-Blacksmith on November 12, 2003.

Joseph will be remembered as a passionate and dedicated advocate for the rights of his people and for his work to ensure that the Oujé-Bougoumou Eenuch would have a permanent home.

He began his personal campaign to redress the injustices experienced by his people as a Councillor on the Mistissini Band Council from 1981 to 1983. Through the Grand Council, he was the official spokesperson on behalf of the Oujé-Bougoumou people from 1981 to 1984. When Oujé-Bougoumou re-established its own Council in 1985, Joseph served as a Councillor until 1990 and then again from 1994 to 1998.

Joseph also served his community in several other capacities including those of Remedial Measures Officer, Community Development Officer, and more recently, as Environment Administrator. Joseph was a staunch defender of the environment. He was deeply involved in protecting the forests from clear-cutting and worked tirelessly to bring



attention to the presence of industrial contaminants in the traditional territory and the need to remediate environmental damages.

As a further service to the community and to the Cree people of the region, Joseph served as President of the Cree Indian Centre of Chibougamau from 1981 to 1991.

Joseph's life was about service to his family, his community, his Cree Nation, and above all, service to God.

Joseph was a deeply spiritual person who committed himself to the spiritual development of his people with the same devotion and commitment that he showed toward the social and political development of his people. He served as a member of the Oujé-Bougoumou Church Board since 1995 and was an adult Sunday school teacher since 1996. Joseph was recognized throughout the Cree Nation for his spiritual leadership and guidance.

The impact of his life's work will be remembered for many, many generations and his memory will live on in the hearts of all those who knew him well and those whose lives he touched.

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- ▶ Conduite de camions à Chibougamau
- ▶ Mécanique automobile à Wemindji
- ▶ Mécanique de véhicules légers à Waskaganish
- ▶ Menuiserie-Charpenterie à Waswanipi

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- ▶ Sawing in Waswanipi
- ▶ Book-keeping in Chibougamau
- ▶ Butcher's shop in Mistissini
- ▶ First aid in Mistissini
- ▶ Truck driving in Chibougamau
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The Woman who turned Cannibalistic

Told by Mary Masty Sr.

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There was once a man with his wife living out on the land. They lived a simple life and were not experiencing any hardship. The couple was living not far from the man's father-in-law. The man hunted beaver and was successful. A long time ago, it was very easy to catch beaver before the time Chipiyuuch lived with beaver. The man brought home beaver.

One day, the man noticed that his wife didn't eat much when they ate. He didn't know what she could have eaten because they didn't have much meat at their camp. It seemed as though she had already eaten. When they ate, she only took a few bites and was full. This happened for many days. The man became suspicious.

One morning, the man got ready to go off hunting. But he was only pretending. He went into the distance but was still able to see their lodge. He quietly sat down in the cover of the forest and watched his camp.

The man saw his wife coming out of the lodge carrying their cooking pot. She headed for the area where she chopped firewood. Her path was very well trodden. The man wondered what she was up to. He followed her from a distance. She walked to the edge of a swamp to a mound. She sat down beside the mound and seemed to be cutting something inside the mound. The man spied from far away. He recognized that it was meat she was cutting as she put it into the pot.

The man walked towards his wife. Apparently, the mound was a bear den. The woman had killed the bear and was cutting meat from it a little at a time. The man asked his wife, "What are you doing? It seems as though you're working on food that you're keeping secret." She

Continued on page 61



C'est avec joie que je tiens à féliciter la revue *The Nation* pour son 10^e anniversaire. Sa publication constitue assurément un support important au rayonnement culturel, social et économique de sa nation.

Grâce aux efforts conjugués d'une équipe dynamique, non seulement la population accède à un outil d'information essentiel à sa vitalité, mais il permet davantage de rejoindre et d'échanger avec d'autres peuples.

Ces liens qui unissent les nations constituent l'une des plus belles richesses de nos sociétés. Ils sont à la source d'une grande solidarité. Une solidarité qui fait notre force.

Je souhaite longue vie à la revue *The Nation*.

Bernard Landry
Chef de l'opposition officielle



MICHEL LÉTOURNEAU
Député d'Ungava

Porte parole de
l'opposition officielle
en matière d'énergie
et de développement
du Nord québécois

Au fil des années, les articles de la revue *The Nation* ont reflété les opinions, les préoccupations et les aspirations de la nation crie. Présente sur tout le territoire Eeyou Istchee, *The Nation* sert de porte-voix et unit les neuf communautés crie. *The Nation* informe sur les grands enjeux et prône les *valeurs crie d'amitié et de respect, valeurs que je partage et sur lesquelles s'est articulée la Paix des Braves*.

Je profite de ce 10^{ème} anniversaire pour saluer et féliciter toute l'équipe qui travaille au succès de la publication et souhaiter longue vie à *The Nation*!

Meegwetch!

As the years went by, *The Nation* magazine reflected the opinions, concerns and beliefs of the Cree nation. Covering all Eeyou Istchee territory, *The Nation* acts as a spokesman gathering together the nine Cree communities. The magazine informs on major issues and promotes *Cree values of friendship and respect, values that I share and that were the basis of the Paix des Braves agreement*.

The 10th anniversary is the opportunity for me to greet, to congratulate and to wish an everlasting success to all the *The Nation's* team!

Meegwetch!

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replied, "Yes. I'm gouging meat from this little bear which I
 had found." The man said, "Yes, you sure are. You've
 almost consumed it all!" The man dragged the partially
 butchered carcass out of the den and took it home. The
 man properly cleaned and butchered the bear.

Long ago, I've always heard that if anyone disrespected
 the bear, there would be severe consequences. Even if
 someone stole bear meat, the spirit of the bear would
 take revenge. That was why careful watch was taken when
 a bear was killed, so as not to offend the spirit of the bear.

The man continued to hunt beaver. When he returned
 with beaver, he noticed there was something wrong with
 his wife. The woman skinned the beaver using the flesher.
 After using the flesher for a while, the blade is covered
 with the fat and flesh of the beaver and the flesher is
 wiped. But his wife didn't wipe the flesher. She sucked on
 the blade to clean it. The man watched her abnormal
 behaviour. He asked, "Why are you doing that? Don't you
 know that beaver is not eaten raw?" The woman looked at



Illustration by: Brian Webb

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The man went back to keep an eye on his wife. But he knew that he couldn't go near her because she was no longer human.

The old man and his wife walked to where their daughter was. As they got close, they could hear her screaming and wailing. The old man called out, "My little daughter, what's wrong? I will try to save you and I will live with you." The crazed woman walked towards her parents and clubbed them right there. She killed her own parents. She was no longer human.

The man knew that he had put an end to this and had no other option but to kill his wife. He hurried back to the main camp and told everyone that the old man and his wife were dead. They were preparing for the woman to come. They knew that she would be following her father's trail. She was no longer the size of a human. She was becoming a giant cannibal. She was eating people now. They waited for her to come. But she didn't come right away. Everyone knew that she was busy eating the corpses of her parents.

The spirit of the bear was vengeful to those who showed disrespect. This was before there was religion. Nobody knew God. That was why things like this happened long ago. That was why this happened to the woman. Today, things such as that don't happen. All game is properly consumed. Only if the game is sick, it is not eaten and is simply burned so the carcass is not lying around. That was what we were told to do.

The woman reached the camp and they were all ready for her. Fortunately, there was a shaman at the camp. That's how the cannibal woman was killed. The man wasn't killed either because he was very observant. He knew that there was no way to save his wife. I heard my grandfather tell this legend. I'm telling you only what I've heard.

Translator's Notes: The legendary character Chipiyuuch lived with the beaver and taught them how to elude Cree hunters. The screaming of a cannibal was because of the agonizing pain of hunger for human flesh.



Proud to be serving the Cree Community!

Happy 10th Anniversary to the Nation Magazine
From staff of Chisasibi Branch.

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CONGRATULATIONS



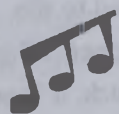
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In the last ten years, the Whapmagoostui First Nation has grown in many ways. The Whapmagoostui First Nation has answered to many outstanding needs of the community by building services and structures to better our lives.

A new health and social services clinic that aid the sick and ailing not only for the Cree population but in partnership with the Inuit, a health center that can serve the community in four official languages, Cree, English, Inuktitut and French.

A new youth center that is designed with the aim in helping the youth achieve their personal and collective goals in life.

A new police station to serve and help those in need of policing services.

A new Firehall to come to the rescue of homes and families.

A new daycare to assist families and their children in the proper guidance, education and care of our children and their parents.

The community of Whapmagoostui has also embarked in new partnerships with our Inuit brethren of Kuujjuarapik in an essential service project that will bring clean and potable water to all homes, services and businesses. At the same time, a new waste treatment project that will help keep our community cleaner and potentially healthier.

With this new approach in creating a brighter future for our families and communities, the next ten years will bring only stronger and clearer vision of our people as Eeyouch in the northernmost Cree community. This is evident with the growth of our population from 450 in 1993 to over 700 ten years later.

We, the Whapmagoostui First Nation also extends congratulations and a heartening thank you to the Nation Magazine for its past ten years of bringing a voice to the people of Eeyou Istchee and wish that the next ten years are just as fruitful.

We are proud to showcase our new logo conceptualized and designed by Robbie Kawapit



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*Congratulations
to the Nation
magazine for
serving the Cree
community
for 10 years*



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Cree Regional Authority
Administration régionale cri

The Board of Directors of Aanischaukamikw,
in collaboration with the Cree Regional Authority,
is seeking applications for:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AANISCHAAUKAMIKW CULTURAL INSTITUTE



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The Executive Director is responsible for the effective and efficient management of all aspects of Aanischaukamikw during this formative period, based on the initial policies and directions as approved by the Board of Directors. The holder of this position will carry out the following tasks:

BOARD OF DIRECTORS / POLICY

Provide guidance to the board in developing the permanent Board structure, and ensure that the full board is appointed and briefed. Implement the vision and direction of Aanischaukamikw, and advise and consult with the Board on all policy matters. On behalf of the board, represent Aanischaukamikw to outside agencies and institutions.

CONSTRUCTION OF AANISCHAAUKAMIKW

Conduct an analysis of Aanischaukamikw's programming as planned and its relation to the proposed building, identify any anomalies and recommend alterations, if appropriate. Oversee the construction of the Aanischaukamikw office in Oujé-Bougoumou.

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Establish the permanent office of Aanischaukamikw in Oujé-Bougoumou and consolidate all aspects of the administration at this office. Define job descriptions, and hire and supervise necessary support staff. Prepare and monitor the annual budget.

PROGRAMMING

Identify staff required to carry out Aanischaukamikw programs, ensure the preparation of training plans, and begin hiring program. Provide leadership to staff to ensure that Aanischaukamikw programs are carried out. Monitor results of programming in the Cree communities and adjust where appropriate.

FINANCIAL PLANNING AND FUND-RAISING

The Executive Director will ensure the financial health of the Institute through close attention to existing and new funding sources from all levels of government and Cree entities. He / she will prepare and submit grant applications in a timely manner, monitor execution and ensure required reporting, and support and oversee fund-raising initiatives.

EXPERTISE AND SKILLS REQUIRED

- Extensive experience in the management of cultural and/or educational organizations;
- Strong background in the development and supervision of professional and technical staff;
- Knowledge and expertise relating the priorities and programs of Aanischaukamikw, with the capacity to speak publicly on Cree culture from an informed perspective;
- Excellent communication skill; experience in fund-raising is an important attribute;
- Commitment to team-work.

TERMS OF APPOINTMENT

This is a full-time, permanent staff appointment. The salary for this position will be commensurate with experience and qualifications.

Please send your application and resume before February 1st, 2003 to:

Willie Iserhoff
Director, Traditional Pursuits Agency
Cree Regional Authority
2 Lakeshore Road
Nemaska, QC
J0Y 3B0

Brian Webb: Breaking the closet door



By Richard Burnett

Brian Webb made history five years ago when, at the age of 25, he publicly came out as a gay man in the pages of *The Nation*. He was brave to do so because I recall Webb was initially reluctant, wary of the hostility his story might provoke.

In fact, it was for that very reason he later refused to write a similar story for Montreal's alternative weekly *Hour* magazine where I am Editor-at-Large.

But five years later, Webb is clearly happy with the choices he has made. In the process he opened up a new dialogue about gay life within the Cree Nation.

"It was nerve-racking because it had never been done in my area before," Webb says today. "I did let my parents and family know beforehand and they were very supportive. I figured it had to start somewhere so it might as well be me. Once it started, it was like a one-way train going faster and faster."

Webb grew up in the closet because, he says, "There was homophobia everywhere. People would call those they thought were gay, names like 'homo' and 'faggot.' They called me that. I wasn't always a target but I did feel there were people [back home] who didn't like me. When you live in a small community, you know how people feel."

The irony, of course, is that gay or "two-spirited" people were historically respected members of native cultures throughout North America before the French, English and Spanish brought homophobia to their shores.

Cultural critic Wendy Susan Parker has noted cultural anthropologists documented this "third gender" status in at least 120 North American tribes.

"They were named by Europeans as 'berdache' from the Persian 'bardaj,' originally a derogatory term meaning a passive homosexual partner, usually a 'pretty' or feminine young boy," Parker notes. "Yet, Indian berdache are very different from the European view of 'berdaj' as 'sodomite heretics' as written about by the Crusaders invading Persia in the Middle Ages.

"Instead, native cultures seem to embrace the notion of an opposite gender identity, different from one's anatomical sex WITHOUT any implied sexual preference. They were viewed by native tribes as having an almost sacred status for the most part. Indian spiritual philosophy not only accepts a 'third gender' status, but almost encourages it. With few exceptions by some of the more warlike tribes like the Apache and Comanche, the berdache are found to comfort-



ably co-exist in almost every single North American tribe, especially in the Midwest, Great Plains and the Southwest."

With the arrival of European settlers and the conversion of Native Americans to Christianity, there was pressure to disown the berdache and the homophobia of Europeans was adopted by many Native Americans.

"My coming out did send shockwaves through Cree territory but after the gasps and the 'Oh my Gods!' it was generally very positive," Webb says. "When my coming-out issue of *The Nation* was published, a crying woman approached my mom and told her, 'You'll be the one to teach us how to love our children!'

"The story even opened the eyes of the people who called me names before. My story didn't just have an impact on gay people, but on all people. It seemed to open everybody's closets."

Today Webb happily lives in Montreal with his boyfriend of two years and works as a translator and interpreter.

"I definitely feel better in my own skin," Webb says. "I am happy to finally be who I am. It feels like [my coming out] was a long time ago. Now for me it's just basically life. It's no longer an issue. Live your life the way you're made and live as happy a life as you can."

Richard Burnett is Editor-at-Large of Montreal's Hour magazine where he writes Three Dollar Bill, Canada's national column on gay life in Canada and around the world.



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In the long history of the Eenouch of Waswanipi – ‘Light on the Water’ People – dating back to 1800’s, an historic moment had occurred for the first-time ever during this year’s Annual Gathering, or commonly referred to as GEEWATAU at the OLD POST, held from July 11th to the 22nd, 2003.

Under a new leadership as a result of elections held on August 22nd, 2002, Chief Robert Kitchen had continued the tradition of calling and holding a formal Council meeting on July 15th and 16th, 2003 at the OLD POST under renewed surroundings and accommodations, compared to the first Traditional Seat of Government for the Eenouch of Waswanipi.

Coupled with fresh air and a gentle breeze blowing from the Lake and the sound of birds and laughter in the background, the new Meeting place was filled with new hope, new faith and new ideas for Chief Robert Kitchen and his new Council as they continue to add another link to our Past in bridging our Proud History with our first Traditional Government.

However, this time around, a new dimension and element had appeared on the political landscape! By special invitation, Grand Chief Dr. Ted Moses and Deputy Grand Chief Mr. Paul Gull of the Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee) had agreed to join the new link with us and to celebrate together on the occasion of bringing our People to their original roots at the OLD POST, especially the landmark ‘Cherry Hill’.

By the mere presence of the Grand Chief and Deputy Grand Chief together at one place at the same time, we were extremely honoured!

As the Children can be heard in the background having a lot of fun and laughter, as the Elders are gathered once again around in a circle sharing stories and legends of the OLD POST and as the rest of the People, Women and Youth alike are going around carrying out their regular chores like the good old days, the picture of our past is becoming more focussed and clear on how our Cree Way of Life at the OLD POST used to be... laughing, playing,

fishing, relaxing, etc. Now, there is a new and different change blowing in the air over the OLD POST, wind coming in from the Lake!

The Grand Chief delivered a very strong message to the People that very day and shared his vision for the future and for the protection of the OLD POST, its restoration and re-construction to its original state. His message became even more powerful when he categorically stated

to the People that we could count on his support to ‘re-claim’ our original homeland and traditional village, the OLD POST, including all other long-standing issues and claims for our People, our Nation and our Territorial Integrity.

Then, all of a sudden, the People felt more united and strong, knowing this support. It was such a wonderful feeling! The People are really happy and thrilled knowing their future is looking bright and promising.

As darkness was setting in over the OLD POST, we could see the sunset over the treeline, ever bright and colourful. The Grand Chief and

Deputy Grand Chief are spending their time with Chief Robert Kitchen, his wife Laura and other guests outside his tent watching the open camp fire glow with sparkles in the air and witnessing the sun go down for another day and tomorrow.

Chief Robert Kitchen in his vision sees, one day in the future, the first-ever Gathering for all Cree First Nations of James Bay and Northern Quebec to be hosted by the People of Waswanipi and to be held at the OLD POST.

It will certainly be another historic moment for the Cree Nation as a whole and in the lives of the Waswanipi Eenouch. We have returned to our roots, a link to our proud Past and we will survive in the future!

Our Great Creator watches over us every day...even at the OLD POST, Geewatau.

Cree Nation of Waswanipi
Chief Robert Kitchen
Deputy Chief Flora Blacksmith





Ville de Val-d'Or



**Wachiya!
Welcome!
Bienvenue!**

As Mayor of Val-d'Or and on behalf of all citizens, I wish to **congratulate** all the **athletes** and **thank family members** and **supporters** who attended the **Cree Nation Tournament** in our beautiful city from **December 4-5-6-7, 2003.**

I believe that such an event contributes in both the sharing and exchanging of our cultural, social and business relationships.

Val-d'Or, being an attractive city and the most important commercial and industrial centre in the area is proud to host such an event for the Cree Nation of James Bay.

We are happy to have greeted you once again for this special sporting event and rest assured that your community will always be welcomed in Val-d'Or.



**Merry
Christmas!**

Let's
make it a
tradition!



CONGRATULATIONS
to the Nation magazine for
their 10th Anniversary

*Wachiya!
Wishing you always a pleasant stay!*

Mayor Fernand Trahan

“ We didn’t say that daycares were the best thing for children. We said they were the second best thing. ”

DOROTHY NICHOLLS: OPENING DOORS FOR CREE WOMEN

by tsa

I recently had the chance to speak with one of our trail-blazers over the phone. The first President of the Native Women’s Association in Mistissini, who helped bring in one of the first Native Daycares in Quebec was very busy with sick children streaming in to see her. She closed her door and gave me 40 minutes of her time.

After speaking with Dorothy Nicholls, I am almost at a loss for words at how admirable she is. I am convinced it has something to do with being born north of Mistissini Lake during a portage when her parents were coming down from their trapping grounds.

Sent away at the age of five, she attended schools in Ontario and Quebec. She started her high school in Quebec City, but her education was somehow cut short. After having raised three children, she tried to continue her schooling in Moose Factory, at the Moosenee Education Centre. Work called her back each time and she returned to school as an adult but in regular class settings, with high school students. Two credits short of graduating, she left to study business and commerce at Algonquin College.

Afterwards, she acquired much on-the-job training in office work. There was also time as a postmaster in Moose Factory, kitchen helper, hostess and “girl Friday” in a Brigadier General’s mess hall in Petawawa before Dorothy finally returned to Mistissini. At this time, the quest for the Native Daycare began.

“I came back to Mistissini to run the motel. My brother and I had bought shares in the hotel and rather than see it fold, I came back here while the high school was being built”.

“From there I worked for the Quebec Native Women’s Association as the first President for the Mistissini Local. But I felt it was a conflict of interest and resigned. I became the Administrator for the Association. I managed the school and that’s where the daycare came in.”

“Bella and Nancy Mianscum and I were the founders of the James Bay Native Women’s Association. Our objective was to establish a daycare here. We saw that in offices here where young women were working, the phone was constantly ring-



ing and mothers had to run home to see to the children because there wasn’t any proper care being given.”

“We knew it wasn’t traditional. We didn’t say that daycares were the best thing for children. We said they were the second best thing. That it was better than having children looking after younger children, and that’s what was happening. Grandparents were out working. The trend had changed; the extended family was no longer as strong as it had been.”

“We spent five years preparing to establish the daycare in Mistissini. We had to do a lot of lobbying in Montreal, at the “Office des Gardes.” At The Native Women’s Association’s national level, we took the situation we were in. The problem was that the provincial government thought we belonged to the federal government and they thought we belonged to the provincial. So it took about five years and they finally offered us 30 seats and then the training came through the Continuing Education program here.”

Located in Mistissini, in a cedar log building they had rented from Mistco Ventures Inc., the Awash Daycare Centre was established in the 1980s. There were 12 people in training and 3 in the office.

“We raised money to furnish our daycare by taking big sheets of paper with different squares of pictures, that were chairs or toys or a TV. Then as we sold the blocks we got our money to furnish our daycare. Most of the money came from the community, the entities.”

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"It has been sometime since we lobbied for our daycares and many persons were not aware of the obstacles and work that it required to make the daycares possible in our community. Those who were part of the team are: the M.N.W.A. Board, Chief Henry Mianscum, Paul Adams, Matthew Petawabano, Manpower, Sylvain Marion, Michelle Rouleau, Guy St. Julien. There are probably others that I forgot to mention..."

The daycare has provided monitored, safe care for the children and this has allowed for women to change their perceptions of themselves. It has given them a voice. They are pursuing higher education at growing numbers and are attaining better positions in the workforce. In Mistissini, there are currently two daycares that are full, each with long waiting lists.

"We see women in good positions that weren't available before, they are there now. There wasn't a really strong women's leadership within the community and it needed something like this daycare to start bringing the women's leadership out. Women ran it and it provided jobs. A lot of the early childhood care workers are now teachers, they have gone on and are still taking courses. So a lot of good things have come out of it."

These days, Nicholls is on the Board of Directors at CINI FM and is still actively involved with children. The streams of sick children coming into her office were from the classrooms at the Voyageur Memorial Elementary School in Mistissini, where she is currently the Vice Principal. She originally started teaching with a job offer as a part time Home Economics teacher at the high school.

"I did 'western' cooking. We taught them Home Ec and Moral Education. During this period of time we were asked to register with UQAQ to start taking teacher-training courses. After I had done half the course, a couple of professors approached me and asked me to go to university because they thought I could do well. So I registered at Concordia University. I was 51 or 52 at the time. I did my TESL and got my BA from there. I think I was 55 when I graduated."

"So then I came back here and I taught secondary I. I taught for three years. I loved it. I think I liked the idea of almost being a child again myself, going through all this."

"Then I was asked if I would apply for the Vice Principal position at the elementary school. I wasn't so keen at first, but my husband talked me into it. I haven't been sorry I took this position."

When asked what the most important things her parents taught her, she quotes her father, her grandfather and her mother.

"My grandfather always told us not to dwell on things that were not important, like being angry over something. Don't let it overcome your life he would say."

"My dad said that you could do anything you want; that if you work at it, you can do anything you want."

"From my mother, always listen. She always said, 'Listen to the other person, listen to what they are saying before you speak. It takes two people to be angry. If someone is angry at you, let them talk, let them continue talking and when they are finished, then give a soft answer in return.' That was my mom's way of thinking."



*“ There
wasn't a really
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and it needed
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CREE NATION OF WASHAW-SIBI



It is with great pleasure that we extend our thanks to the entire Cree Nation for the welcome and the recognition we received as the Cree Nation of Washaw Sibi on September 11th, 2003 at the Annual General Assembly in Waskaganish.

May the Creator guide our journey into the future.

*Meeg-wetch
Cree Nation of Washaw Sibi*

Aboriginal Sport & Recreation

by Jeff Spencer

I've been working in sports and recreation here in the Cree Nation for 10 years now, so it seems appropriate that I begin writing about sports for the Nation in the magazine's 10th anniversary issue.

I am dedicated more than ever to giving our young people opportunities, such as the National Aboriginal Hockey Championships and the North American Indigenous Games, so they will have things to look forward to and do for their health, spirit and pride. This rejuvenated feeling comes from the thoughts (both sad and happy) in remembrance of the young athlete that I had come to know and care for as family – Mark Petawabano. I want all young people to know that there is someone who cares about you. I am here for you any time to assist you in opportunities, guide you through tough times and be a coach and a friend.



Mistissini Falcons Win -
Shaking Hands = Sportsmanship

National Aboriginal Hockey Championships (NAHC)

The NAHC held its first annual event in 2002 in the Mohawk Territory of Akwesasne, the culmination of large-scale planning. As Chairperson for the National Aboriginal



Coaching

Hockey Program, I wrote the initial bid package for hosting the event as well as the Technical Packages (regulations and guidelines). The National Aboriginal Hockey Championships is a Canadian Hockey Association sanctioned Championship of Bantam / Midget age groups combined with both female and male categories.

In the first ever championships, Manitoba defeated our Eastern Door and North male team to claim the gold medal, while our female team was defeated by Ontario South in the gold medal game. This year the championships were once again held in Akwesasne with our Eastern Door and North male team winning bronze and the female team silver. We are the only region to receive medals in both categories, both years, which is quite an accomplishment. There were many Cree players participating on both teams.

The 2004 National Aboriginal Hockey Championships will be held in Prince George, British Columbia from April 18 – 24th. There will be two tryout camps for this event – on the Cree Nation of Mistissini January 22 – 24, 2004 and in the Mohawk community of Kahnawake March 12 – 14. Players will attend either camp, but not both. Applications will be available shortly.

North American Indigenous Games

The North American Indigenous Games is a sport and cultural multi-nation event bringing together Aboriginal people from across North America every three years to celebrate sport and culture. The dream of a large scale Indigenous Games oriented in Reno, Nevada when the National Indian Athletic Association (NIAA) held a meeting of 48 representatives. Canada's representative was John Fletcher of Edmonton. Here, the dream was born.

A few years later, Alberta's Willie Littlechild (Cree Nation) introduced the concept of a World Indigenous Games at the World Conference of Indigenous Peoples in Geneva, Switzerland. Representatives of the world's indigenous peoples were thrilled with the concept. One Brazilian Indian Chief was so moved by the idea that he presented a Sacred



Scorekeeper Bentley Mianscum



Jewel Matoush, future hockey star
for women's hockey in Canada



Most Valuable Player Class A - Eric Benac



Best Goalie Luke Mianscum



Gametime!

Arrow to Willie Littlechild. The same arrow is part of the "Baton" which was used to open the first North American Indigenous Games in Edmonton in 1990.

The next North American Indigenous Games are set for July, 2005, in Buffalo, New York. We are in the process of finalizing an athlete application form as well as forms for communities interested in hosting tryouts and playdowns in 2004 in preparation for the 2005 NAIG. (For more information visit the Aboriginal Sport Circle website at www.aboriginalsportcircle.ca).

Cree Nation Eenouch

This is the second season for the Cree Nation Eenouch Midget AA Hockey Club. This is a great success for the Cree Nation considering the years spent fighting to achieve recognition as part of the Abitibi-Temiscamingue AA league. The Cree Nation Eenouch is based in Waswanipi and is an all-Aboriginal team made up of players from the Cree Nation as well as other Aboriginal Communities like Weymontachie, Mashteuiatsh and Maniwaki.

This season there are a total of six teams in the league: the Eenouch, Val D'Or, La Sarre, Rouyn-Noranda, Amos and Hearst (Ontario). As of this article the Cree Nation Eenouch have a record of 9 wins and 5 losses (and 2 additional losses in overtime), good enough for third place behind La Sarre and Val D'Or.

Ouje-Bougoumou Senior Hockey & Broomball Tournament

This past weekend the first Senior Hockey & Broomball Tournament took place in Ouje-Bougoumou. There were so many entries that the arena in Chapais was used for games all day Saturday. In all, there were 32 teams participating in six categories for this local invitational. Hats off to the organizing staff as participants and fans were raving positive reviews of the event. The Albert Mianscum Memorial Sports Complex is certainly well equipped to host all participants and spectators.

What event would not be complete without the final game coming down to overtime between the Mistissini Trappers and Waswanipi Nabakatuk. This was a "Class A" event with both teams playing hard for the victory. Congratulations to all participants for making this first event of the year a success.

In upcoming articles, I will continue to update the Cree sports world as well as print a calendar of events for the Cree Regional Events and Entertainment (C.R.E.E.). If you have events that you wish to share information about, place results or photos, or know of an athlete you would like to showcase, contact me at (418) 923-3560 or by email at jeff.spencer2@sympatico.ca

Women's Broomball

Nemaska Capitals	1	Waskaganish Northern Lights	0
MVP - Cherish Stephen - Waskaganish Northern Lights			

Fellowship Hockey

Opitciwan Rangers	6	Mistissini Rusty Blades	0
MVP - Bobby Capissit - OJ Legends			

Women's Hockey

Mistissini	5	Waswanipi Ice Blizzards	2
MVP - Jewyll Matoush - Mistissini			

Class C Hockey

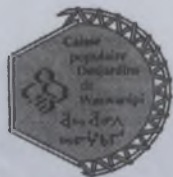
Mistissini Ice Wolves	9	Waswanipi Grand Chiefs	4
MVP - Norman Shecapio, Mistissini Ice Wolves			

Class B Hockey

Mistissini	4	Opitciwan Storm	2
MVP - Shawn Iserhoff - Mistissini			

Class A Hockey

Mistissini Trappers	3	Waswanipi Nabakatuk	2 OT
MVP - Eric Benac - Mistissini Trappers			



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Johnny Saganash: MARCHING FORWARD WITH EM1

With the signing of the Paix des Braves in 2002 came the go-ahead for the huge hydro-electric project near Eastmain, EM-1. There are over \$735 million in contracts in total for the construction of EM-1, with \$300 million set aside exclusively for Cree enterprises. The camp that will eventually house 2,400 people opened at the same time as the construction began last year. Cree Counselor Johnny Saganash has been there since the beginning. He has worked for Hydro Quebec as an electro-mechanic for 11 years. He has also been a game warden for SEPAC, a chief of police in Waswanipi, a Lineman with sub-contractors of Hydro Quebec and a union director for Hydro Quebec. The Crees approached him with this position and he was very happy to take it on. His job is to help the Cree get involved in the project, to help get contracts awarded to the Crees under the Cree Consortium, and to help them obtain their CCQ cards.

Saganash also gathers the names of those who are willing to work and tries to have companies hire them. Within the camp he also advises on anything that has to do with the Crees. He shared some of his observances and thoughts on the project with the Nation.

"Some of the successes include Cree Construction doing their best to hire Crees. As of today we're at 22 per cent of Cree manpower because of the winter freeze up, they are laying off people. Starting in spring 2004, the general labourers will be needed. The service road will need to be resurfaced and the south dykes will need a lot of workers".

"We are also starting to have non-Native companies hiring Natives, slowly but surely. One of the big issues is taxation. If they work for a non-native company, they will be taxed and people don't want to do that. So we are trying to figure out ways to get more Cree involved."

"We also have two Cree carpenters from Chisasibi that were hired to do their stages (apprenticeships) by CEGERCO, who have a lot of contracts at EM1."

"The overall turnaround rate is between 25-30 per cent, same for native and non-natives... The hardest part is telling people that they have to be independent and responsible for their acts especially in regards to alcohol. I am trying to find a way to get a social worker to look at how we can help people help themselves with the alcohol problem. If we keep the camp dry, there will be bootlegging."

"We are also trying to get the Cree electric and mechanical jobs but it needs a lot of training, which is sometimes not easy. It can take 2-3 years to do the training."

"The French language is an obstacle. The Cree can work in management if they can understand and communicate in French. There are a lot of openings. The person has to sacrifice more for the training to get the higher jobs."

**"I TIP MY HAT TO
THE ONES WHO
REALLY WANT TO
WORK. THEY ARE
SHOWING UP ON
TIME EVERYDAY AND
DOING THEIR JOBS."**

"On an average day people get up at 5 am, depending on their shifts, and start at 7am. They come back at 5:30 pm and the cafeteria is open until 7 pm. If they miss dinner, there is a restaurant. Most of them go to bed around 9 or 10pm. It's a 60-hour week, with Sundays off, but most people work that day too. The shifts are either 35 days in and 8 days off for janitor and non-contract services or 54 days in and 10 days off for construction workers. I tip my hat to the ones who really want to work. They are showing up on time everyday and doing their jobs."

Saganash would like to thank all the Native companies that have hired the Cree and the non-Native companies for their willingness to hire Crees. He encourages people to pursue training to get the better jobs and would like to remind people that one incident gives all the Cree a bad name.



Eeyou Istchee – The Peoples' Land

This is the place where we live and where we find our roots. This is the place where we were taught to treat one another with respect and to have consideration for those in need.

We have always had challenges to face. Today we have before us: diabetes, employment for all who can work, protection of the land and its resources and to define a future for our children and for their children. Our strength lies in our unity, in our Cree culture and in our considered regard for one another. We face the future with

the confidence that Eeyou Istchee will continue to provide for us and that we will continue as the Eeyouch to provide for one another.

Congratulations to "The Nation" for those efforts that you have made in the past 10 years to promote the continuation of these ideals and to promote our strength as the Eeyouch – The Cree Nation, in pursuit of our common future on our lands.

Grand Council of the Crees (Eeyou Istchee)

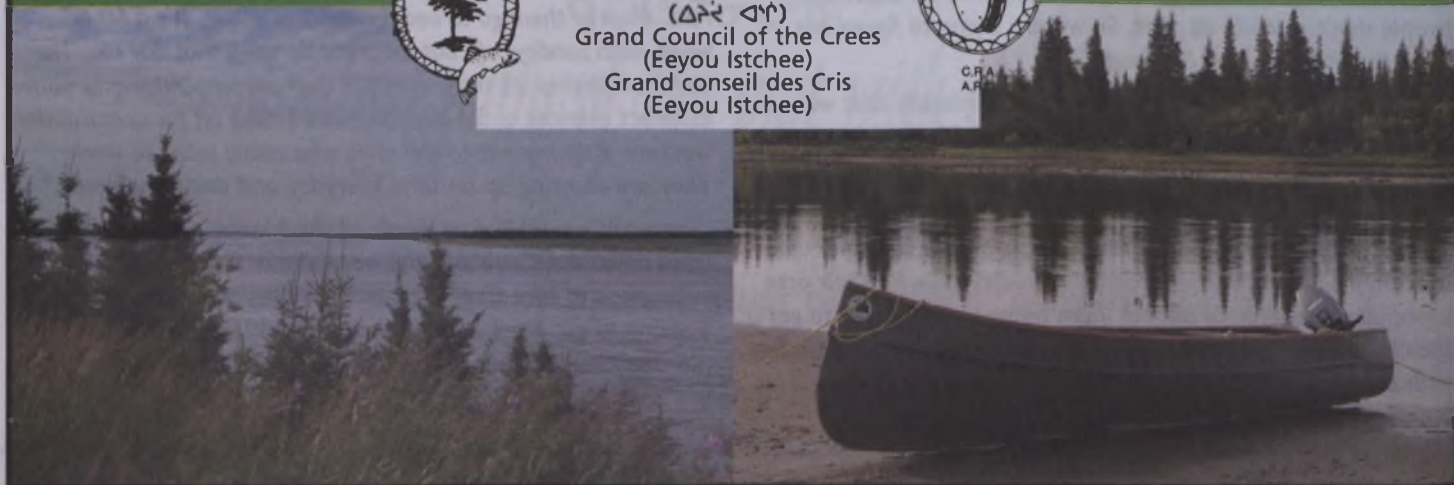


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Administration regional Crie

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Grand Council of the Crees
(Eeyou Istchee)
Grand conseil des Cris
(Eeyou Istchee)



GRA
A.P.



POLICE NEWS – MISTISSINI POLICE

PERIOD OF November 3 – 16

Unfortunately the PAMS (Police recording computer system) wasn't able to give a regular update of occurrences. In the past two weeks things have been quiet compared with the previous period.

The one continual area of concern is the amount of Break-ins occurring in recent weeks. There were three more break and enters of significance during this period:

Neoskweskau Memorial Arena was broken into Nov. 9 and about \$200 stolen. There are three youth suspects – two have been met, questioned and charged. Most of the stolen money has been returned.

Mistissini Daycare was also broken into during daylight hours the same weekend. A small safe was stolen and smashed (later recovered on the street). Stolen were about \$300 cash, a cheque for \$200 and a Palm Pilot. There is one youth that has been questioned and charged after attempting to cash the cheque at a local store.

Police received a call of a break in at K's Corner Store where there was one suspect still in the store. Upon arrival police found one youth hiding in the storage area. The store cash register was recovered outside slightly damaged but with no loss of money.

Having been involved with the Mistissini Police on many occasions and assisting in their annual reporting over the past 10 years, I can say that although the crime rate shows a rise, crime fighting has also increased in merit. One reason for noting a rise in crime are the police statistics – this can also be considered positive, as it means there is more police intervention. That means more arrests and more crimes solved. Community-based policing (also called proactive policing) has also been a positive step.

In the last issue there was mention of the postponement of Halloween trick or treating until Saturday, November 1, in the afternoon. In speaking with many parents on this date, Director Blacksmith advised that the community was in favour of the move due to the circumstance and some went as far as to say that they hoped in future years the same would happen.

This past week Officer Stanley Neeposh was recognized in Quebec City for 15 years of service. Congratulations to Stanley Neeposh and all other police past and present for their dedication to the safety and well-being of our community members throughout the Cree Nation.

REPORTED BY: JEFF SPENCER

Thanks to wildlife management programs involving sportsmen, Canadian geese in North America swelled from 1.1 million in 1940 to more than 3 million today.

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HOLIDAY SCHEDULE:

December 8-9-10-11-12: 9:30am-9:00pm
December 13: 9:30am-5:00pm
December 14: 1:00pm-5:00pm
December 15-16-17-18-19: 9:30am-9:00pm
December 20-21: 9:30am-5:00pm
December 22-23: 9:30am-9:00pm
December 24: 9:30am-5:00pm
December 25: Closed
December 26: 1:00pm-5:00pm
December 27-28-29-30: Regular hours
December 31: 9:30am-5:00pm
January 1-2: Closed



Don't miss the arrival of Santa Claus by helicopter on Saturday Dec 6th at Place Le Chainon. Activities, music and gifts for all children!



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VIOLET PACHANOS

by tsa

*“Any woman is capable
of doing a man’s job.
I don’t think there’s
anything a woman
can’t do ”*

Trailblazers are those people who break uncharted ground, who go where none have been before and who open the door for others to pass through in the future. When we think of trailblazers within the Cree communities, one name that comes to mind has to be Violet Pachanos. She broke the Cree traditional gender barrier in 1989 when she became the first woman to be elected chief of Chisasibi. Then 10 years later, she broke another barrier by becoming the first woman to be elected to the position of Deputy Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees (GCC).

It wasn’t a role she had dreamed about or even thought of until someone asked her to run for office in 1989. She had been working for the Grand Council for many years as the liaison officer and was living in Ottawa at the time. Before that she was the corporate secretary with the Cree Regional Authority when it was founded, later working as CRA treasurer. So, as she puts it “I was aware of the politics.”

It was not a position that came easily. “There was opposition when I got in, especially from the men,” Pachanos says. “There were four other candidates at the time, including a couple of former chiefs. Even after I got in, there was opposition to the fact that I was a woman. It wasn’t the tradition, it was always men.”

“I think it’s always a challenge to try to make changes, to make changes within the band administration. People are always resist-

ant to change. The finances are difficult because everybody wants something.”

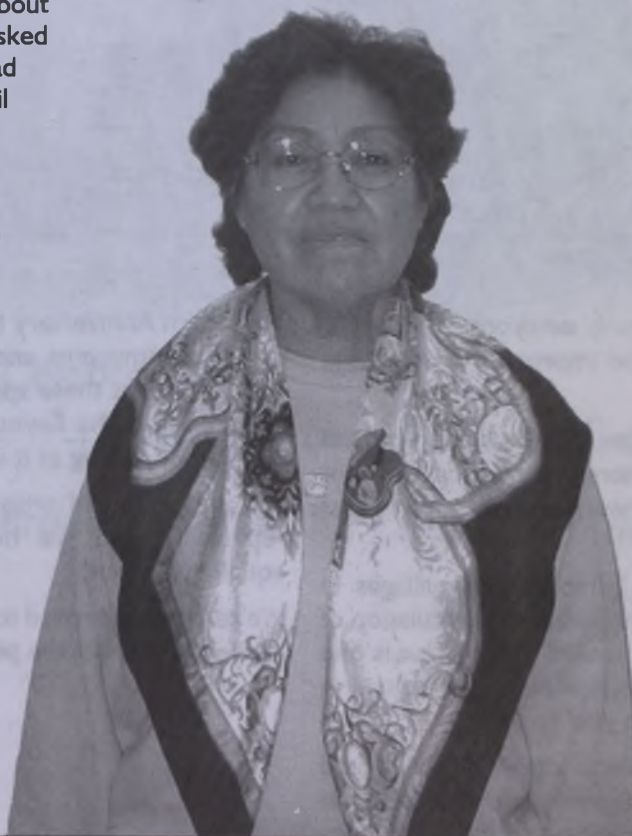
She didn’t let it faze her and did such a good job that she was re-elected for another term, and years later, elected again. One way of overcoming the opposition at the time was by pointing out that there were other women in leadership roles. Margaret Thatcher was prime minister of England at the time, someone also referred to the Queen of England.

“After a while, they faced it.” She says about those who opposed her.

As Chief and Deputy Grand Chief, she did quite a bit of international traveling to important summits and forums. She was in New Zealand twice with the Grand Council on fact-finding trips. She was invited to Japan to participate in a forum on different international Native issues. David Suzuki was another one of the invitees, along with Mohawk representatives to talk about the Oka crisis. Violet was there to speak about Hydro Quebec. Violet also attended the World Conference against Racism in South Africa in 2002 where she made a statement that was heard in the Cree communities. Another summit she attended was on social development in Copenhagen.

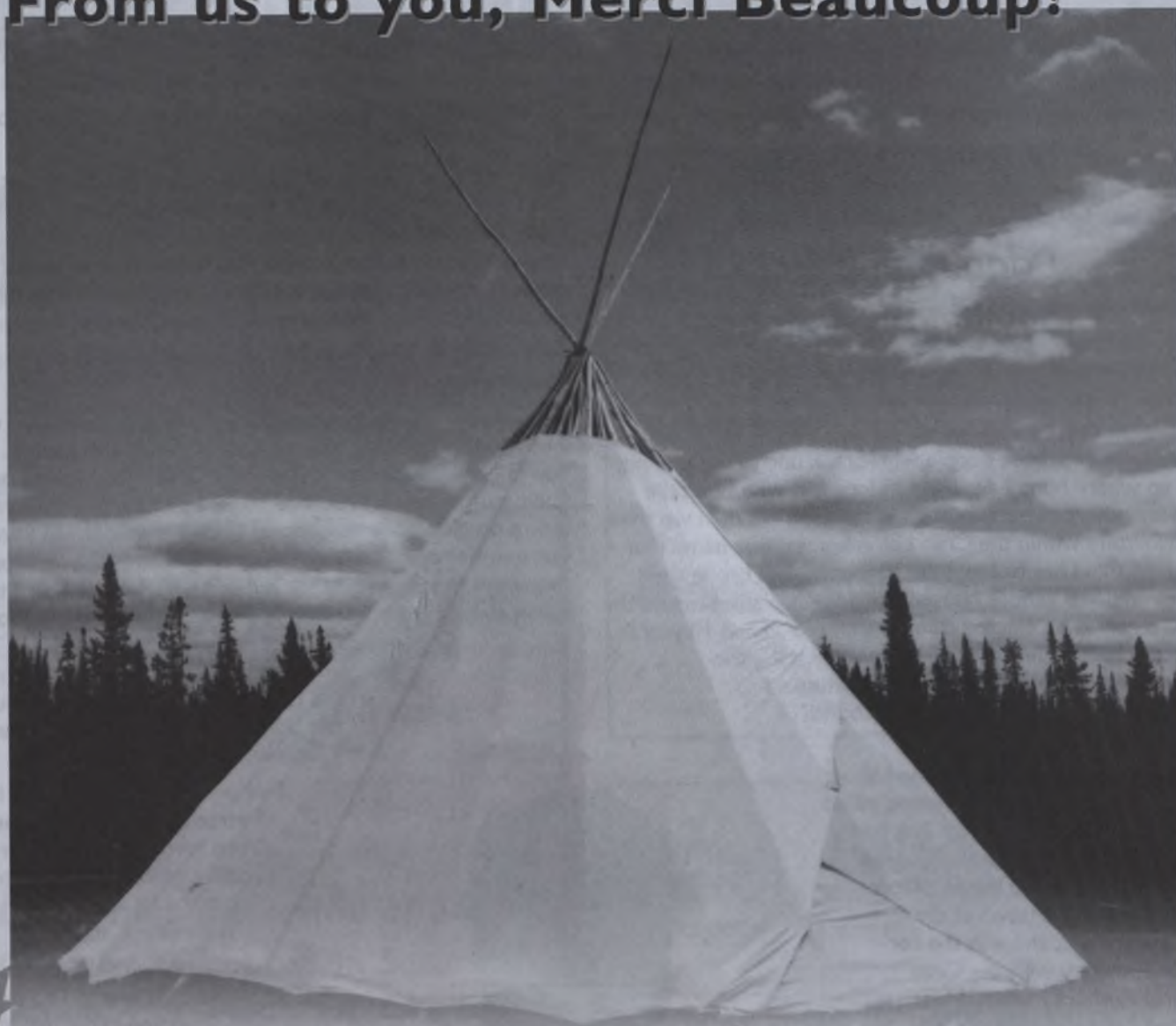
Her position has also taken her all across Canada where she has been involved with other native groups. “So I got to know a bit about other nations in Canada”.

When asked if she had always wanted to be involved in politics, she says, “I don’t know if I could say I wanted to, it just kind of happened. Someone asked me to run and I just got involved. I had the background for it. I didn’t jump into it though. I had to be a bit cautious. You always wonder how people will accept you. It wasn’t in my mind that I was a female and therefore couldn’t, I just went at it because work needed to be done.”



Overcoming the traditional Gender Barrier

From us to you, Merci Beaucoup!



The Nation would like to thank everyone who had a hand in helping to shape and improve our magazine over the last ten years.

To our readers and companies who've done business with us, we would not be where we are today without your trust and belief in our never-ending quest to give a voice to the people.

The Nation is available in 28 towns and villages in northern Quebec and Ontario, and has a circulation of 7000! This amazing number means The Nation is one of the most widely read Native news magazines in Canada, and it's all thanks to you!

Ten years ago, The Nation became a reality through hard work, dedication and a large degree of sacrifice. With this issue, we wanted to give something to the community that would be remembered for years to come.

This Tenth Anniversary Special Edition is a celebration of our communities and the people that make them great. Without these sports stars, politicians, doctors, and pioneers, the Eeyou Nation wouldn't be as prosperous and strong as it is today.

We are proud of who we are and the people we represent, and we hope everyone out there is equally as proud.

We're looking forward to another ten years of getting to know more about the people and their unique stories!

Meegwetch!
The Nation Staff

Overcoming the traditional Gender Barrier continued

The Nation: How has it changed since you first won the position?

"I feel it's more acceptable now. I would hope that women who get into these positions would have an easier time. Right now it bothers me that there are no women in leadership roles, there's nobody in the Grand Council, and all the chiefs are men. There's only one woman on the Board, from Waswanipi."

*"It wasn't in my mind
that I was a female
and therefore couldn't,
I just went at it
because work
needed to
be done."*

TN: How does it feel to be the first woman to attain these positions?

"It's not something I think about or thought about when I got into it, it just happened. Any woman is capable of doing a man's job. I don't think there's anything a woman can't do".

Words that Violet has obviously lived by. She didn't get involved because she was supporting a cause or because she wanted to prove that women could do it, she did it because she believed she could regardless of her gender. She inadvertently became the first, among the future many. She also inadvertently proved that women could be successful leaders, that they have a voice that should be heard and needs to be heard.

These days Violet works for The Cree Construction and Development Corporation, as the coordinator for the relocation project. She is also presently part of the Working Group for the Cree Nation Governance, where she works on recommendations for how the Cree government is going to work.

She would like to encourage more women to get involved, "Especially in the community. It doesn't matter what it is as long as you feel it. Don't be afraid to speak out and participate, especially in politics. It's the only way you are going to be heard."



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Deputy Chief Kathleen Wootton Visits McGill Campus

by Lucas Wootton

Montreal - Mistissini's current Deputy Chief, McGill alumnus Kathleen Wootton visited McGill campus on October 14th, 2003, to participate in a lecture on Canada's residential school system. The course lecturer, Christopher Stonebanks, invited Mrs Wootton to his Interculturalism class to talk about her residential school experience.

Canada's tainted history of cultural genocide is well known in academic circles and should be common knowledge by now, but it isn't. Part of the problem, according to Mr. Stonebanks, was the complete lack of material within North American education systems "that would make us the slightest bit uncomfortable about our continent's history." Given that, what better part of North American history to ignore than the treatment of First Nations people?

To set the tone for the class, early in the lecture Mr. Stonebanks asked his students what they thought of when they heard the word 'Blackhawk'. Among the responses from the students were (1) Chicago's National Hockey League franchise and (2) the US military helicopter by the same name. One student knew that Blackhawk was the name of 'a Native-American' - but was seemingly unaware of the Sauk leader's legacy, and the tragic fate that befell nearly all of his people when they were displaced by military force due to American colonial expansion during the so-called "Blackhawk War" of 1832. To further emphasize his point, Mr. Stonebanks then asked the class if they'd ever heard of the Beothuk. Nobody raised a hand. These particular students were totally unaware of the complete genocide of a Native tribe that occurred in (what is now called) Newfoundland - the Beothuk became extinct in 1829.

When dealing with 'Indians' through the military became too great a financial burden, the task of annihilating the already decimated indigenous cultures of North America was delegated to the residential schools, most of which were controlled by various Christian denominations. The solution to the 'Indian problem' was to simply take young children away from their families, by force when necessary, make them speak a new language, practice new customs and participate in religious ceremonies that were often totally foreign to them.

The class watched a portion of *Sleeping Children Awake*, a documentary about the residential school experience, which features portions of Shirley Cheechoo's play, *A Path With No Moccasins*. Then Mrs. Wootton made her presentation to the Class.

Of course, one of the first things that happened to new residential school students was the haircut. The children would then perform janitorial work around their school on a daily basis throughout the duration of their stay. Physical abuse was not uncommon. Punishment for misbehaviour took many forms - the children's hands were strapped, or they were made to stand in the corner for great lengths of time or were just plain spanked. One of Mrs Wootton's teachers would routinely hit children with a meter-long pointer for literally any mistake - if the children mispronounced a word, even if it was the first time they'd seen it, this teacher would hit them. Terror kept the young residential school students in line.

Stonebanks asked his students what they thought of when they heard the word 'Blackhawk'.

Mrs. Wootton recalled that she was not even permitted to speak to her own brother while they were attending the same school. Incidentally, the punishment for speaking one's own language was a mouth full of soap. Church attendance was mandatory, twice a week. It is in this way that Native people were losing their culture and spiritual beliefs across North America and the Cree of Northern Quebec were no exception.

Mrs. Wootton then shared a visual demonstration that she had originally seen presented by Gordon Peters, Director of the Centre for Indigenous Sovereignty, at the 2003 First Nations Policing Services conference in Calgary. The demonstration quite aptly illustrated the fundamentally detrimental effect that the residential school system had on Indigenous cultures in Canada.

A traditional Cree tamarack goose decoy was placed on the floor of the Jack Cram Auditorium, to represent Cree culture. Then four students were arranged around the decoy, to represent the Cree children. Four more students surrounded the children, to represent the Cree mothers. Four students were arranged around the mothers, to represent the Cree grandparents. And four more students were arranged around

the grandparents, to represent the Cree fathers whose role it was to protect their communities. Finally two students were selected, one to represent the federal Indian Agent and another to represent the Clergyman. The Indian Agent removed the four children from the centre of the circle, and



the Clergyman removed the tamarack decoy. As in the demonstration, Cree children had been removed from the influence of their families and communities in an attempt to 'assimilate' them into the non-Native culture. Thus, the traditional societal roles of the parents and grandparents as educators and protectors were rendered obsolete. The result: a

catastrophic disruption of Cree culture with negative social repercussions lasting to this day – the last of the residential schools closed in the mid-80's.

The demonstration was followed by a question and answer period that lasted until the end of the class in which both Mrs. Wootton and Mr. Stonebanks answered numerous questions from the students. One student asked Mrs. Wootton what it was like to return to her community from residential school. She replied that she felt like an outsider in her own community and home – that she couldn't relate to or get along with her own family. She recalled that elders would complain about kids who came home from residential school being lazy. Complicating matters, she quickly found that she was unable to perform many of the tasks expected of a young woman in Cree society – e.g. to prepare fish and game or stretch and tan hides and pelts. The residential schools prepared Cree children, if at all, for life in English or French Canadian society – not for life at home with their families. As it was so often put, the purpose of the residential schools was to "remove the Indian from the child". A report published in 1847 by the Province of Canada said it this way:

"Their education must consist not merely of the training of the mind, but of weaning from the habits and feelings of their ancestors, and the acquirements of the language, arts and customs of 'civilized' life."

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100 - BIRTHS

We aunts; Sheila, Donna, Suzie and Jeannie are proud to announce our new born baby nephew, Kyran Kerry Hunter Donovan Rupert, who came into our lives on October 27th, 2003 at 12:56pm, weighing 9.6 pounds. Child of Stephanie Rupert and Allen Snowboy. Congrats you guys! Baby Kyran, we'll always have gum and candies for you. Promise! Lots of hugs, kisses and soft pinches. Love, your aunts in Whapmagoostui.

I would like to say congratulations to my sister Jayme Atsinya and her boyfriend Gabriel Georgekish on the birth of their son (my nephew) Peter James Micheal Anthony. He was born in Chisasibi on November 18th at 11:48 a.m. weighing 9lbs and 10 oz. It's just too bad you couldn't have him her in Wemindji. Lots of Love LDA a.k.a Doris...D

Happy 14th birthday to Scott Atsinya on November 28th. I hope your birthday is fun and you get a bunch of hickey's...lol..jk! Well it's been 14 years you've been in my life and I always used to wonder when mom was going to take you back to Val d'Or. JFK! If I ever thought that way I'm really glad she didn't. Love ya man oopsie I mean boy..jk...LDA.

I would like to wish a Happy Birthday to my Big Sister Jessica Faries, who now turns 21, on November 19. Now living in Timmins, no longer in Waskaganish....lol...Juss kidding there Det. And I would also like to wish another Happy Birthday to my aunt Emily Faries whose Birthday is on November 21. Well have a good one!!! From your Sis/ Niece Maggie

A happy 1st Birthday going out to Randal Daniel Wapachee on Nov 27. Hey!!! I can't wait to see you on X-mas holidays. I miss you so much!!! Hope you have lotsa fun on your special day, don't eat too much cake!!! Leave sum for mommy and daddy...aiight...Jaboueh shaa Randal. Luv you!!! And I also want to wish a happy birthday to my aunt Maggie Minister from Nemaska, love and prayers, Jessica

I would like to wish my uncle, Jeremiah Shecapio Blacksmith, a Happy Birthday on the 20th of November. You know, mum says that when I grow up I'm gonna grow up to be as big and tall as you, so I was wondering if you can maybe watch my back until I get old enough to take care of myself, so when I get older then maybe I can watch yours, just think about it okay...and on top of that, I'll even teach you how to flap your arms like my Tigger does. So I hope you have a wonderful day and mum also says Happy Birthday and she strongly advises you not to go out and party...I don't know what she means but you might! Sending lots of luv and little drooly kisses, your not so little nephew, Eadan. Ojay

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR BUDDY, MARY LENORA ON NOV. 9/2003. I MEAN 'BELATED'..LOL. MAY YOUR YEAR AT 17 YEARS OLD WILL BE A GOOD ONE!!!!FROM; YA BUDDY HERE IN WASK. P.s.take good care of you lil angel Malachi, aiight

I would like to wish a Happy 18th Birthday to my friend Joy Kitchen. Her birthday is on November 28th, 2003. Hope your day will be special as you are. You're like an angel friend. I'm glad that you are my friend. Always be yourself, don't let anyone change you and you know that you are perfect the way you are. Best of luck in everything (and with...) he he. Keep up the good work in hockey. I know how much you love hockey. Once again, have fun girl and take care. From me, pooh freak. PS: boit pas trop la...

I want to wish a Happy Belated Birthday and a Happy Wedding Anniversary to two special people in my life; my daughter Stella Sarah Bearskin and her husband Keith Bearskin on November 5th 2003. I love you both! From Mom Stella in Whap.

We would like to send this one to a very special person. Happy 18th Birthday to Joy Kitchen on November 28th 2003 and many more to come. From, your friends always, your team mates, the Waswanipi Ice Blizzards.

I like to wish a Happy 13th Birthday to Corrina Diamond on November 11th. And I also like to wish Leon Polson a Happy 4th Birthday on November 15th. Happy Birthday to you both and many happy returns. Love from Linda (Wask)

Birthday wishes to Lizzie Mamianskum on November 24th, Joanne Kawapit on November 16th and to Jeannie Mamianskum on November 27th. May you guys have many more birthdays. From your pals in GWR

I would like to wish a Happy 5th Birthday to my sunshine Jesse Austin Lawrence Mayappo on November 9th. I hope your day will be special as you are. Have lots of fun! Love always, Mom Bessie xxxxx

102 - WEDDINGS

Congratulations to our friend John Blackned and to his wife Juliette Potts on their wedding on October 24th, 2003. Sorry we could not be there but we wish you all the best that life has to offer. Congratulations from the Mayappo Family in Eastmain.

104 - GRADUATIONS

Congratulation to my friend's who graduated at Canadore College. To: Barbara Hester (G.A.S), Sylvia Bearskin (Office Adm), Daisy Shecapio (Law Clerk), Paul Shecapio (Business), Bill Blackned (Rec& Leisure), Faith Wapachee (G.A.S & Soc), Lena Trapper (Business Adm), Deborah Polson (Business Adm), Louise Rupert (G.A.S), Sherman Salt (Business), Velma Georgekish (What is it again???), Sherri Grantham (IWAP), Mary Ann Gull (G.A.S), Kathy Iserhoff (G.A.S) and to the ones I forgot to mention. **YOU DID IT! YOU DID IT! CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF YOU!** May you continue a great success in all your endeavors and achievements. It was hard at the same time but you've over come of all the obstacles you faced and you faught it because you are

brave, strong and you guys are so cool...lol.jk! . I wish you all the best in the future. From: Your most annoying friend at Canadore, Cynthia.

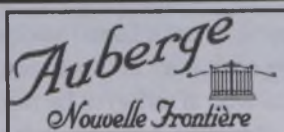
300 - PERSONALS

A school in Pierrelonds is looking for a Shadow/Integration Aid for a 6-year-old Cree boy in Grade 1. He is intelligent but has a difficulty adapting to a schedule. I have been informed that he is a bit aggressive and quite active. Transportation can be offered from the train station. Responsibilities are: help child adapt to routine, help with school work, follow him around school (during recess too), meet him at the bus, keep up with child and make sure he does not become aggressive. Criteria: Aboriginal, man (preferred but not necessary), physically strong, finished high school, must speak English (Cree would be a definite asset), must like working with children. The position would start as soon as possible. The hours are from 8:30 to 11:00 a.m. Monday to Friday, it is part-time for now with the possibility of full-time in the future (depending on his adaptability). I do not know the salary, there may be a scale, and though I am sure it is over minimum wage. If you are interested, please contact Louise McLaughlan at (514) 626-3924, or you can call me for more information at (514) 283-0901. Alana.

Richard's leaving

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